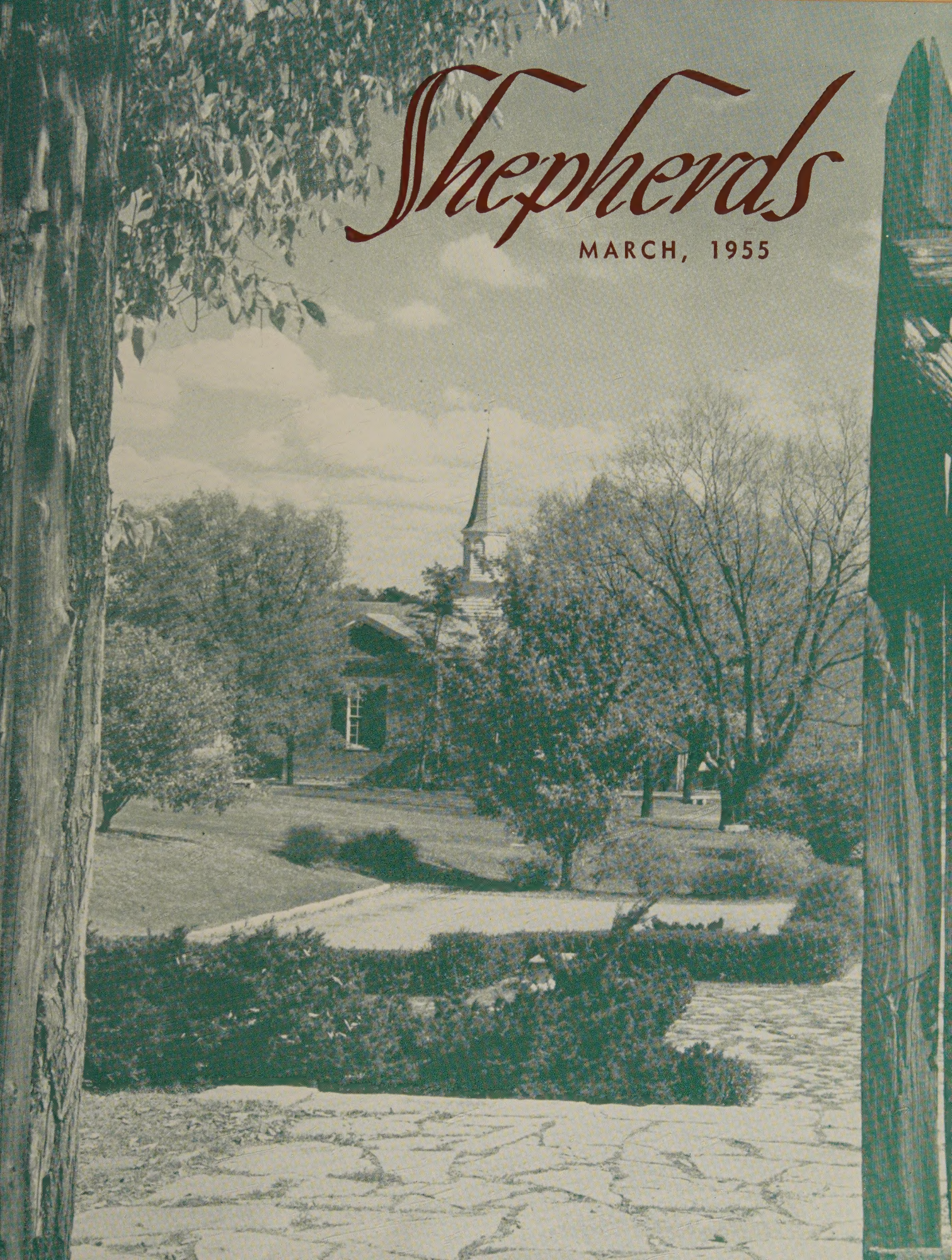
Shepherds

MARCH, 1955



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SHEPHERDS

For Commission on Membership and Evangelism in the Local Church

March, 1955

Vol. 9—No. 6

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$10.00, for chairman and 10 other members of Commission on Membership and Evangelism

$ 5.00, for the chairman and 3 other members of Commission, and also the pastor

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When sending in subscriptions, please list names and mailing addresses of all persons, as well as name of church, charge, District, and Conference.

Total circulation this issue, 40,000

Cover Photo: Courtesy of Louis C. Williams

GOOD NEWS FLASHES ...FROM THE FIELD

1955 CHAIN OF PRAYER

The 1955 Chain of Prayer in which about a thousand Methodist Churches will combine to maintain a continuous prayer vigil was initiated by the staff and employees of The General Board of Evangelism and three Nashville churches in THE UPPER ROOM CHAPEL and by Methodist churches in ten cities and towns across the nation. They were Mt. Vernon Place Church in Washington, D. C., Broadway Temple in New York City, Trinity Church in Chicago, Travis Park Church in San Antonio, Union Avenue Church in Memphis, First Mexican Methodist Church in Phoenix, Arizona, Ebbert Memorial Church in Springfield, Oregon, Medford Church in Holden, Missouri, Centenary Church in Ashland, Ky., and The Methodist Church at Minter City, Mississippi.

Each twenty-four hour period from 6 p.m. to 6 p.m. the following day has been assigned to two or more churches who will maintain a continuous prayer vigil that will fill each minute of 1955. Churches still wishing to participate may apply to The Prayer Life Movement, 1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 5, Tenn., and a date for participation will be assigned.

CHRISTIAN WITNESS MISSION

Sixth Annual National Youth Fellowship CHRISTIAN WITNESS MISSION – – a workshop conference – – Columbus, Ohio – – Feb. 24-28, 1955. Headliners – – Bishop Hazen G. Werner and Bishop Matthew W. Clair – – 1,000 young people and adult leaders – – in a United Christian Witness Mission – – Dr. Warren Wiant, Dr. I. R. Sumner, co-directors in charge of Christian Witness Mission in churches of metropolitan Columbus – – Sunday 3:30 p.m., Evangelistic Rally – – Address: Bishop Matthew W. Clair.

IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL

In December, 1954, the Commission on Membership and Evangelism of Mt. Vernon Place Methodist Church, Washington, D. C., sponsored an "Institute of Evangelism" with 225 laymen attending six sessions led by Dr. G. Ernest Thomas. At close – – 130 teams pledged to make three visitation evangelism calls each month.

YOUTH AND CHRISTIAN HOMES

Dyersburg, Tennessee, Methodist Youth Fellowship members called in every home of church membership – – left a copy of THE UPPER ROOM and a letter urging each to have family devotions.

HOLY HABITS IN HIGH SCHOOL

During Spiritual Life Mission in Michigan an English teacher received book report from a junior girl on "The Holy Habits" by G. Ernest Thomas, – – so impressed she had report read to entire class. Appointed the junior girl to lead class in sentence prayers each day of the Mission.

UPPER ROOM RADIO-TV PARISH

THE UPPER ROOM Radio-TV Christmas program from Thanksgiving until Christmas was on the air 8,316 times – – used by 790 stations in all 48 states, and in Hawaii, Alaska, the Philippines, and Canada.

THE BISHOP'S EVANGELISTIC CRUSADE IN THE CENTRAL JURISDICTION

The College of Bishops of the Central Jurisdiction is leading in a great crusade featuring Church Attendance (New Year's to Easter), "Four Nights For God" (in intensive visitation evangelism), and Youth Christian Witness Mission (on week-end of "Four Nights For God" program). Schedule of "Four Nights For God" and Follow-up:

Atlantic Coast Area, Bishop J. W. E. Bowen – – March 20-27
Baltimore Area, Bishop E. A. Love – – March 13-20
New Orleans Area, Bishop W. J. King – – and Bishop A. P. Shaw – – April 3-10
St. Louis Area, Bishop M. W. Clair – – April 3-10

RECOGNITION CERTIFICATE

The Wisconsin Conference Board of Evangelism devised a most handsome "gold" certificate which was awarded at the fall district conferences to churches showing a net increase of 5% (or more) in their membership during the Conference Year 1953-1954. Among the Churches receiving the "Recognition Certificate" were 15 in the Appleton District, 23 in the Milwaukee District, and 27 in the Watertown District.

CHRISTMAS CONFERENCES

December 27-30, 1954, the Christmas Conference for young ministers of the South Central Jurisdiction was held at Oklahoma City University, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and for young ministers of the Southeastern Jurisdiction at Epworth by the Sea, St. Simon's Island, Georgia.

LOCAL CHURCH COMMISSION CHAIRMEN

January 4, Local Church Commission on Membership and Evangelism chairmen from twelve representative churches were invited to meet with the General Staff of the Board of Evangelism at the Nashville office. Dr. C. Lloyd Daugherty, Jr., had three objectives in mind in issuing the invitation:

1. To help the staff members see the problems and opportunities of twelve local churches through the eyes of the Commission Chairmen.

2. To help these Chairmen solve certain local church problems in the area of evangelism and possibly to help them meet better their responsibilities, and

3. To gain fresh insights and discover new areas of opportunity and service which might be shared with the general Church.

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75¢ each. $7.50 per dozen.

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_____ copies, **Children's Prayers**—Kendall.
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35-CENT BOOKS

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35¢ each; 3 for $1.00; $3.50 per dozen.

_____ copies, **You Are Important**—Smith.
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These five booklets are helping to meet the problems of sorrow, disappointment and discouragement.

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J. Manning Potts, Editor

Sermons in the March Issue

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H. E. D. Ashford
McDougall United Church, Edmonton, Canada

A Study in Conscience
Theodore P. Ferris
Trinity Church (Episcopal), Boston

The Garden of Gethsemane
I. W. Gernert
First Lutheran Church, Nashville, Tennessee

Missing the Real Thing
Albert P. Shirkey
Mt. Vernon Place Methodist Church, Washington, D.C.

Living in a Neat World
Roy L. Smith
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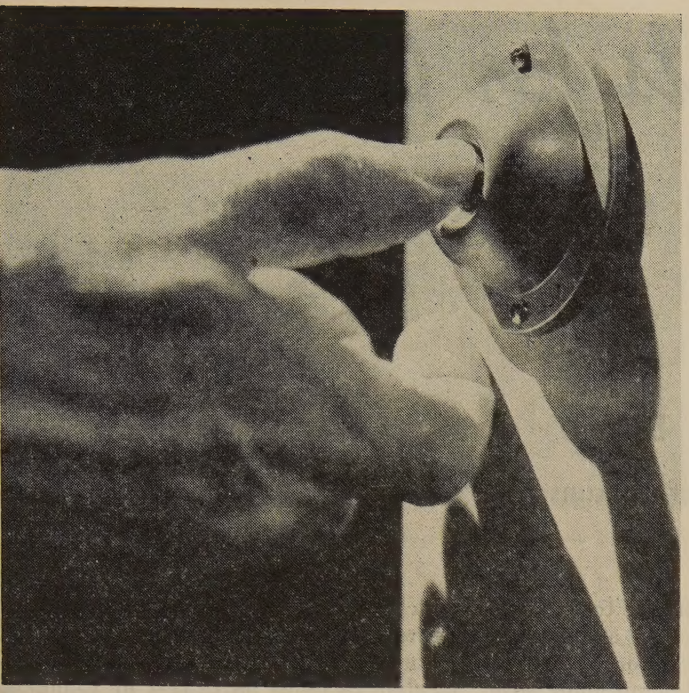


Visitation Evangelism and the Local Church Commission on Membership and Evangelism in the LENTEN *"Four Nights for God"* Program

VISITATION EVANGELISM is one of the most effective methods known for winning persons to Christ and His Church. Based on the method which Jesus taught His disciples, it combines the spiritual power of pastor and people in presenting the claims of the Master to individuals where they are—in their homes, at their places of business, etc. Because it goes to the people, it expresses Christian concern in such a way as to discover their specific problems and needs through challenging them for Christ and offering them the services and resources of the Church.

A Fundamental Responsibility

The Local Church Commission on Membership and Evangelism has a foundamental responsibility in this great Christian enterprise. Working under the direction of the pastor, and in close harmony with him, this Commission should plan early for the two-by-two visitation prescribed for the second phase of the "Four Nights for God" program. The following suggestions should be carefully considered.

1. Ask the Official Board and the church organizations to clear the calendar of all other engagements during the "Four Nights for God" program.
2. Determine well in advance the natural area of your church's responsibility and compile a fresh list of prospects.
   - Remember that one of the best ways in which to do this is to take a Religious Census prior to your "Four Nights for God" program.
   - Study the booklet, *The Religious Census,* for detailed suggestions on conducting a successful religious census.
3. Place the name of each prospect on a *Prospect and Assignment* card, along with all available information concerning him.
4. Group the prospects in natural geographical units easily accessible to the visitors.
5. Keep all prospects from the same family grouped together for the same team.
6. Cooperate with the pastor as he enlists visitors for the week of visitation. (*Do not encourage persons to volunteer for this work.* The pastor needs to choose those individuals whom he believes to be best suited to do it. Support him in this by inviting only those persons whom he names. Use the *Visitor's Agreement Card.*)
7. Plan with the pastor for a service of spiritual consecration of the lay visitors. (Use the *Commissioning Service* in the Visitation Evangelism Packet.)
8. Hold visitation suppers for the purpose of instructing the visitors during the second phase of the "Four Nights for God" program.
   - Study carefully the booklet, *How to Have a Successful Week of Visitation Evangelism.*
   - Use the *Turn Over Chart,* "They Went Forth Two-by-Two," available from TIDINGS at $12.00 each.
   - Make Christ-centered calls in the homes of prospects from 7:00 to 9:30 P.M. during the visitation week in the "Four Nights for God" program. Use the *Commitment Folder* in visits.
   - Report back to the church for sharing and inspiration.
9. Cultivate the friendship of those won and pledge them to attend the training sessions scheduled for the third phase of the "Four Nights for God" program.
   - Use the *Turn Over Chart,* "Spiritual Life for Methodist Christians," available from TIDINGS at $12.00.
   - Make available to *all* members helpful materials on the nature of the Church and the responsibilities of members.

"Four Nights for God" in a Small Church

by

Rayford L. Diffee

Pastor, Chidester, Arkansas

IT was a happy privilege and a thrilling experience for the pastor and his people of the Chidester Methodist Church, one of six churches on a circuit, to participate in the "Four Nights for God" program so successfully held in the Camden District of the Little Rock Conference.

It is our opinion that the "Four Nights for God" program is one of the most practical, Christ-like programs that the church has ever undertaken. The whole program reflects the method and spirit of Christ in winning people for the Master and making disciples of them. Not only has it added new members to our church, but it has greatly enriched the spiritual lives of the entire membership of the church.

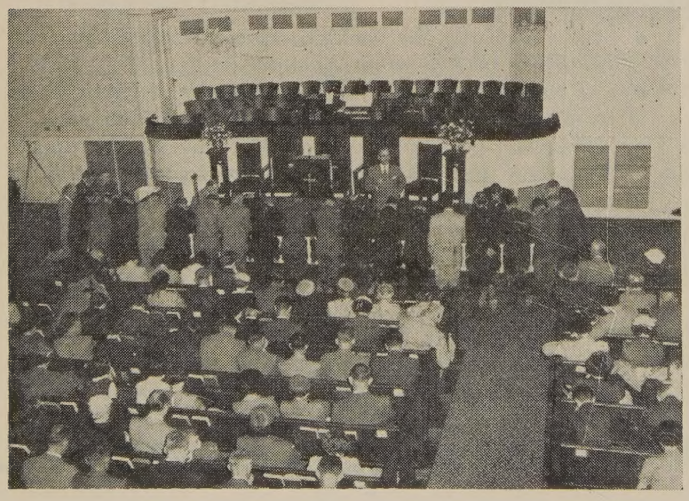
Jesus knew that, if His own disciples were to minister to the needs of others, they must have a special preparation which they could receive from being alone with their Master. He took Peter, James, and John up into a mountain and was transfigured before them. It was this experience of being alone with Christ, and getting a glimpse of His glorified face, that enabled the disciples to go down and minister to the needs of a sinning, suffering, and dying world.

It was a mountain top experience, similar to this, in which the ministers of the Camden District witnessed in our preparation period on the District level, under the leadership of our Superintendent, Connor Morehead, and Eugene E. Golay, of Nashville, Tennessee. We went away from these meetings with a feeling that we had been with Christ and had got a glimpse of his glorified face. Now we could go back to our people and share with them our enthusiasm.

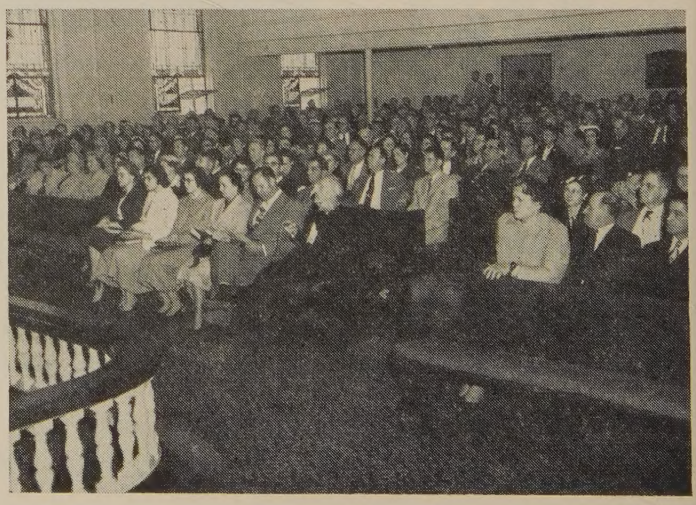
In the local church this program called for organization and planning, which was no small thing, not even in a small church like ours. Our little town has a population of 400 and is located 14 miles northwest of Camden, which is the county seat. Our consolidated school has an enrollment of only 225; and, since there isn't much to offer a young person here in our community after he finishes high school, we lose about 90 per cent of our young people to other communities and towns. Our church school enrollment is 130, with an average attendance of 90. Therefore, with a small community and church where I have been pastor for five years and where we thought we knew everyone, we felt sure that there were no prospects in our community. Consequently, our faith was a little weak to begin the campaign.

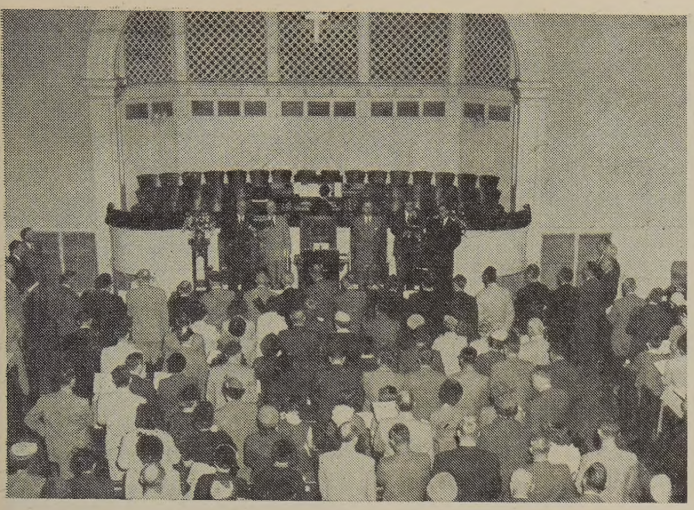
We began to organize the local church two months before the actual campaign. With the cooperation of the Commis-

Pastors and part of the congregation in the dedication service, First Methodist Church, El Dorado, Arkansas, share inspiration in connection with the Camden District "Four Nights for God" program.



Eager people crowd the sanctuary for an inspiration and motivation meeting in the "Four Nights for God" program held recently in the Camden, Arkansas, District of the Little Rock Conference.





The altar is filled by persons renewing their covenants with God at a dedication service in the "Four Nights for God" campaign.

Prayer undergirds every evangelistic movement. Here a prayer group at First Methodist Church, Camden, Arkansas, prays for the Crusade.

sion on Membership and Evangelism, a religious census was taken. We found how wrong we were in thinking that we had no prospects. We sometimes have the spirit of the disciple who wanted to stay on the mountain and build three tabernacles, wanting to remain with this thrilling experience, with never a thought of the nearness of the people with whom he might share the experience. Jesus' command was—and still is—to go down to the multitudes. "Go out into the highways and hedges." When Jesus and His disciples came down from the mountain, they found people who needed their help. When we obeyed the command of Christ, "Go out into the highways and hedges," we found our prospects and were surprised to know how near the doors of the church some of them were. Of course, some of them were people that we had invited before "to come with us to Christ." Some we found in our Sunday school. But wherever we went, we found people who were waiting for an invitation "to come with us to Christ."

These prospects were listed and fellowship teams were appointed to cultivate them. This meant going into the homes of the prospects for friendly visits and inviting them to church. It was amazing what this phase of the program did both to the fellowship team and the prospect. The fellowship teams began telling the pastor of the joy that was theirs when they worked with these people. Prospects told the pastor about the friendly visits they had from the church. Before the campaign started, many of our prospects were attending the worship service at the church.

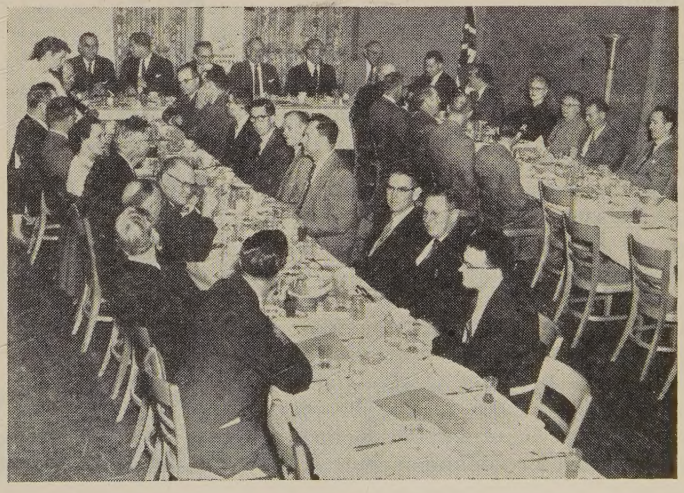
Prayer groups were organized, and we had more people praying in our church than I have ever known. Consequently, the spiritual fire began to spread, and there was a great spiritual revival in our local church.

Four weeks before the actual campaign we made progress reports to our District Superintendent on the number of prayer groups, the number of prospects listed, the materials ordered, and the visitors enlisted and trained.

There was a period of preparation for the visitors. In our local church we used four consecutive Sunday nights for this preparation. The chart, "Spiritual Life for Methodist Christians," by G. Ernest Thomas, was used for the instructions. Not only were the visitors invited to these sessions, but all those who were interested in learning more about the work of our church. It was amazing to see as many as 70 people come together for these periods of instruction. We discussed the following subjects in these sessions: "What

Preaching the word inspires Christians to present the claims of Christ to others. Dr. Kenneth Shamblin thrilled the large congregation with his stirring sermons.

Fellowship is an important phase of Christian experience. Visitors in the "Four Nights for God" program meet for a breakfast to bring reports and share experiences.



Methodists Believe," "The Motives of Evangelism," "Our Church and its Program," and "Prayer and Evangelism." In these preparation sessions the people were greatly helped, and the visitors were better prepared to go out and talk to other people about the church and its work and invite them "to come with us to God."

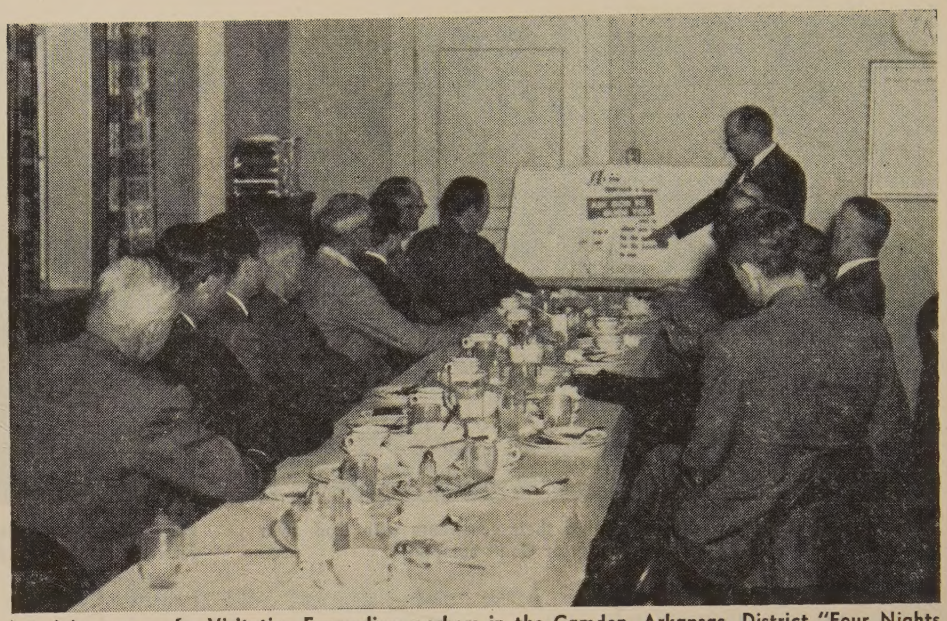
On November 28 there was a District mass meeting held in El Dorado, Arkansas. There were 15 persons from our church who traveled 100 miles to attend this great service where J. Kenneth Shamblin, of Little Rock, lifted us to another mountain top experience. Our visitation program started the night of November 29 and continued for four nights. The pastor met with his six consecrated visitors each evening at 6:00 o'clock for a delightful meal, prepared by the ladies of the church, followed by instruction from the chart, "Two by Two." After this period of instruction the visitors, with a prayer in their hearts, went out to call in the homes of our prospects and invite them to Christ and His Church.

Each morning, after the night of visitation, the pastor took one layman with him and attended a breakfast meeting in Magnolia which was 100 miles round trip. These breakfast meetings were an inspiration. The ministers of the District brought their reports each morning to these meetings, and Mr. Golay lifted us, each time with an inspiring message.

We were very happy over the results of the campaign in the local church. There were 32 prospects called on and we received 22 commitments. This was nearly 70 per cent of the prospects. It was a great service in our church on December 12 when these 22, after having been instructed in the faith and work of The Methodist Church, stood before the altar and took the vows of the Church.

The "Four Nights for God" program proved a spiritual blessing to our church and community. Every phase of the program is essential, but if there is one phase that stands out more than any other, to me, it is the cultivation of the prospects. We believe that the secret of our success was in letting these prospects know that the church was concerned, that we loved them, wanted to help them and also let them feel that they were needed.

We can recommend the "Four Nights for God" program to any church, no matter how small it may be, because we believe it to be the method that Jesus used in winning people.



A training supper for Visitation Evangelism workers in the Camden, Arkansas, District "Four Nights for God" program. This session held at First Church, Camden, is being led by Rev. Robert Moore.

Use the New

TURN OVER CHART

"Spiritual Life for Methodist Christians"

by G. Ernest Thomas
Director of Spiritual Life

Provides information on the Methodist faith, the Methodist heritage, The Methodist Church at work, the duties of a Methodist Christian. **Outstanding.** 96 pages. 2 colors. Metal binder at top.

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TIDINGS

Headquarters for Evangelistic Materials

1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 5, Tennessee

The "FOUR NIGHTS FOR GOD" Program in a Local Church

by C. Ray Hozendorf
Pastor, First Methodist Church
Magnolia, Arkansas

EARLY in August, the Official Board, on recommendation of the Commission on Membership and Evangelism, approved the over-all "Four Nights for God" program. The Commission and the Board were enthusiastic about it and agreed to work diligently for it. The Commission assumed full responsibility for developing the plans and promoting the program.

Eugene E. Golay of the staff of the General Board of Evangelism, came to the District in mid-September to instruct the pastors. After this instruction period, the General Committee set up the following committees: (1) the Prayer Committee; (2) the Prospects Committee; (3) the Visitation Evangelism Committee; and (4) the Spiritual Life Committee. Members of these committees came together for instruction and inspiration by Mr. Golay.

The Executive Committee for the Camden, Arkansas, District "Four Nights for God" program discuss plans for the campaign. Members of the Committee are, left to right, Neil Hart, Fred Schwindemann, Cannor Morehead (Superintendent), Kenneth Shamblin, Eugene E. Golay, and C. Ray Hozendorf.

The Prayer Committee, the Prospects Committee, and the Visitation Evangelism Committee went to work immediately to get the plan under way. Five prayer groups were organized in zones over the city, and prayer meetings were held to pray for the "Four Nights for God" program as well as for specific persons whom we knew had not made professions of faith. These prayer groups continued meeting through the dates of the program and practically every organization in the church was praying for the program.

The rolls of all the classes were studied for persons enrolled in the church school who were not members of the church. The membership rolls were carefully studied for husbands or wives who had not accepted Christ. Then, in cooperation with the other Methodist church, a city-wide survey was conducted. When the compiling of results was

completed, the committee had 212 prospects to turn over to the Visitation Evangelism Committee.

In the meantime, the Visitation Evangelism Committee had secured 50 of the most consecrated men and women in the church as visitors. The pastor met with these 50 men and women for four training sessions, using the chart, "Spiritual Life for Methodist Christians." This training proved very valuable to the total program since it prepared the visitors in mind and heart. Many of the visitors expressed appreciation for the chart, particularly its emphasis on the beliefs and duties of Christians. These training sessions were conducted during the church school hour.

As soon as the names were available to the committee, the prospective members were contacted. The first communication was a personal letter, inviting them to a class in the church services. A week later, another letter went out, telling of the "Four Nights for God" program and indicating that someone would visit them soon. The TIDINGS leaflets, "What Christ Offers You" and "Be a Member Where You Are," were included in this letter. Some personal contacts were made by representatives of the class, but not enough to be of any great value to the total program.

By this time the entire church had become conscious of the "Four Nights for God" emphasis. Classes, circles, the men's fellowship and other groups were praying for the program and for individuals. During the evening worship on three Sundays prior to its beginning, the congregation observed the altar hour for a special prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

The day appointed for beginning the "Four Nights for God" program was November 28. Thirty-two of the 50 visitors attended the District Rally. The four days following were used for visitation evangelism, with suppers at 6:00, instruction at 6:30, and visitation from 7:00 to 9:00 o'clock each evening. The highlight of each night came at the report time, when each team told of its successes and its disappointments. The visitors were inspired and enriched by this witnessing.

The results of the visitation evangelism were really marvelous. By the end of the week a total of 51 commitments had been secured. Twenty-seven were first commitments and 24 were transfers. Some of the transfers were actually renewals of faith after a long lapse of indifference to Christ and His Church. Several of the first commitments were men and women who were far advanced in years, but who had never accepted Christ.

The weeks following the actual visitation were busy ones. Each person was visited by the pastor for spiritual guidance. Four training sessions were conducted for them, using the chart, "Spiritual Life for Methodist Christians." The climax of the program came on December 19 when the members were received. Many of the old members said, "I have never seen so many new members at the chancel before." It was a spiritual Pentecost for us.

We tried to make the Service of Reception meaningful to the persons being received and also to the membership of the church. The persons being baptized stood together and were asked the ritual questions. Those taking the vows stood at the chancel and, after meeting the conditions, knelt while the pastor placed his hands upon the head of each and said: "I receive you into The Methodist Church, a Church of Almighty God, and pray God's blessings upon you." Then the persons coming by transfer were asked to renew their vows and were received in like manner. At the close of the service, the congregation welcomed the new members with the "right hand of Christian fellowship."

On Thursday before the new members were received, they were invited to an all Church Family Night as honored guests. Each new family was assigned a sponsoring family which had similar interests. This family extended a personal invitation to the new members and offered to go by and pick them up. The two families came together upon arrival at the church and sat together during the dinner. The host family introduced the new members to the family night group. This helped to acquaint the new members with at least one family in the church and prevented them from feeling too much alone in the larger group.

The assimilation program is just beginning, but it includes assigning each member family to a Fellowship Friend who will be responsible for getting each member active in a class and help him to feel a sense of belonging to the church. The Fellowship Friend will continue for a six-month period, or until the new member has been fully assimilated into the program of the church. The Fellowship Friend is to invite the new member family to his home for supper and fellowship together. He is to leave no stone unturned that will strengthen the new members' faith and purpose and lead them to the highest fulfillment of the Christian life.

During the intensive week of visitation evangelism, many people were called upon who did not make commitments. We are planning a follow-up of these prospects. The first step will be to have persons near the same age and with common interests make visits in the homes of these persons simply to create a friendly atmosphere and to seek to lead them to participate in some church activity. The visitors agreed to continue the evangelistic program on a monthly basis so that we can reach newcomers as soon as they arrive in town and thus lead them to an active relationship with Christ and His Church.

As we look back over the program we see many shortcomings in our plans. First, we did not begin our program soon enough. Second, we did not do enough personal cultivation before the date of visitation. We missed several prospects because they had not had any previous contact with our church. Third, the strength of the "Four Nights for God" program lies in the cultivation of the prospects so that they feel a part of the fellowship before they are visited for the purpose of securing a commitment. They need to feel that they are among friends. Our failure to become personally acquainted with them and to build a personal friendship and to cast a spirit of real concern about them before the visitation prevented our winning some.

"too good to pass up"

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by G. Ernest Thomas

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TIDINGS, *Headquarters for Evangelistic Materials*
1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 5, Tennessee

Southwest Texas Conference Plans

Program Officially Adopted by the Annual Conference

(The following article is an official program adopted by the Southwest Texas Conference. It is reprinted here from an attractive brochure published by the Conference.)

STATEMENT BY BISHOP A. FRANK SMITH

The proposed program is attractive and workable; its aims are the fundamental aims of all Christian bodies, and it will receive the glad support of our people everywhere.

These are days of concern and anxiety for us all, but they are great days. Attitudes and values are now being created that will influence mankind for generations, and probably centuries to come.

The Church must make the most of these days, and we shall, by the grace of God.

PLAN OF ORGANIZATION

The objective of evangelism is to reach people for Christ and bring them into the fellowship of the Church. The "Four Nights for God" Mission is an organized endeavor to aid the Church in accomplishing her major task.

The proposed method is the same time-tested one which Jesus used. . . . That of sending out Disciples two by two. If members of His Church, today, will follow this example and go out to witness for Him, they like the disciples of old, will return rejoicing in victory.

Conference Program

The "Four Nights for God" program was initiated by the Conference Board of Evangelism, recommended by the Inter-Board Council and passed by the Southwest Texas Annual Conference. Thus making it the official program for the local churches.

District Organization

To be planned by the District Superintendent and his District Secretary of Evangelism or by a District Committee appointed by the District Superintendent and the District Secretary of Evangelism.

DUTIES:

1. Select dates.
2. Determine plan of promotion on District level.
3. Publicity.
4. Select committees.
   a. **Spiritual Preparation**
      —To initiate a movement of concern, undergirded with prayer.
      —Urge each local church to want, seek, and find prospective members.
      —Promote organization of Prayer Groups in churches.
   b. **Promotion and Publicity Committee**
      —Urge the Pastors and churches to participate in the "Four Nights for God" program.
      —Where necessary call pastors and Chairmen of Commission on Membership and Evangelism together for instruction and guidance.
      —Present the program at Sub-District and at District meetings.
   c. **Finance Committee**
      —To work out an estimated budget (if necessary) which will include materials, publicity and promotion expense for everything above the local church level.

Local Church

I. **Advance Preparation**

1. Present program to the Commission on Membership and Evangelism for approval as soon as possible. The Commission on Membership and Evangelism will have the responsibility of carrying out this program for the local church.
2. Present to Official Board for their endorsement.
3. Set date for the Mission.
4. Order necessary materials—See Shepherds Magazine.
5. Find all **Prospects.**
   —Community Religious Census.
   —Attendance registration at Worship Services.
   —Checking church school roll for parents of children who are not members.
   —Any other method that is available. . . . The pros-

pect list will largely determine the success or failure of the Mission.

6. Select and train visitors.

II. Essential Committees in Local Church

1. Spiritual Preparation.
   —Call the church to prayer.
   —Organize prayer groups.
   —Enlist shut-ins to pray.
   —See that each prayer group gets a prayer list.
   —Pray for the prospects.
   —Encourage family prayers.
2. Promotion and Publicity Committee.
   —Make sure that every detail has been worked out.
   —Send written announcements about "Four Nights for God" to each church group meeting.
   —Put up posters.
   —Get announcements in local papers and Church Bulletins.
3. Visitation Committee.
   —Develop list of Prospects.
   —Carry out Religious Census.
   —Set up two by two visitation evangelism prayer prospects—visitors—materials—training.
4. Assimilation and Spiritual Life Committee.
   —Conduct four instruction periods for members won during the visitation. (Use chart, "Spiritual Life for Methodist Christians," $12.00, TIDINGS.)
   —Keep close check on newly-won members and see that they are brought into some group in the Church.

THE "FOUR NIGHTS FOR GOD" PLAN

A. Cultivation of Prospects—unrelated and non-preference prospects should be cultivated for six weeks prior to Mission—assigned to friends—invited to services and organizations—sent special letters and materials—put on prayer list of visitors. Materials and suggestions available from General Board of Evangelism.

B. Four Periods of Preparation for the visitors.

1. "What Methodists Believe."
2. "The Motives of Evangelism."
3. "Our Church and Its Program."
4. "Prayer and Evangelism"—Develop prayer groups with visitors.

The dates for this phase should be set by the Planning Committee.

a) Four consecutive nights in a given week.
b) Four consecutive Sunday or Wednesday nights.
c) Two periods each of two nights.

Training Materials will be available from TIDINGS, 1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 5, Tennessee.

These preparation meetings for visitors may be set up for a group of churches or a sub-district. All visitors meet together for training by one of the pastors.

C. Four Nights of Visitation Evangelism.

1. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 6:00 P.M. supper meeting in each church, visitation instruction, and visitation by teams of two. (The training chart, "Two by Two," should be used for this instruction.)

   The visitation program may begin on Sunday afternoon and carry through Wednesday night.

   In rural churches the visitors may plan a luncheon training meeting in a home, then visit in the afternoon.

2. A suggested nightly procedure.
   (The problem of geographical location of prospects will need to be considered in all assignments.)
   a. Monday—Visit Methodist preference and transfer prospects.
   b. Tuesday—Visit all youth and young adult prospects.
   c. Wednesday—Visit unrelated couples prospects.
   d. Thursday—Visit unrelated and non-preference prospects.

D. Four Periods of Instruction for those making commitments.

1. Instruction Topics, using the new chart, "Spiritual Life for Methodist Christians" (TIDINGS)
   a. "The Methodist Faith"
   b. "The Methodist Heritage"
   c. "The Methodist Church at Work"
   d. "The Duties of a Methodist Christian"
2. Suggested plans:
   a. Four consecutive nights beginning on Sunday night.
   b. Four consecutive Sunday mornings or nights.
   c. Four consecutive Wednesday nights.
   d. Preaching services may follow the Visitation Crusade.

E. Prepare Local Church for Receiving New Members.

—As you would make careful preparation for receiving guests in your home so you should also make every preparation within the Local Church to receive those new members and make them feel welcome and at home.

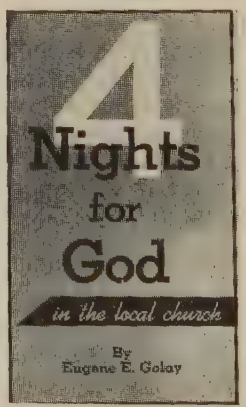
Note: Order all necessary materials from TIDINGS, 1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 5, Tennessee

For information: Write Eugene E. Golay, 1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 5, Tennessee.

The Basic Booklet for Your

FOUR NIGHTS FOR GOD

Program



FOUR NIGHTS FOR GOD

by Eugene E. Golay

A practical "how" booklet giving plans and procedures for the campaign.

10¢ each; 6 for 50¢

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The Lenten Season, by its very nature, presents us with an opportune time in which to promote CHURCH ATTENDANCE. If your church is not now participating in the NATION-WIDE CHURCH ATTENDANCE CRUSADE, plan now to make it part of your Lenten program.

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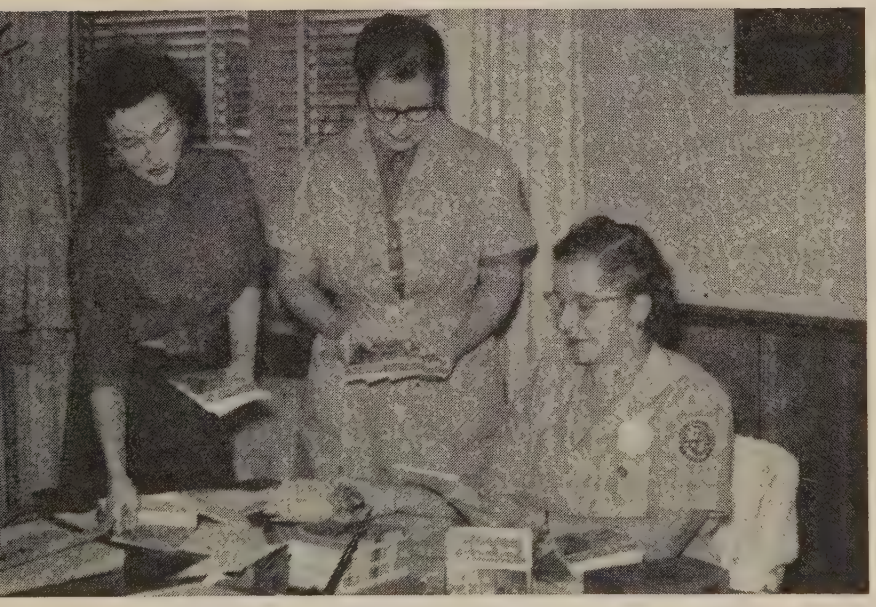
THE UPPER ROOM HOSPITAL PROJECT

(Baton Rouge, Louisiana)

Rev. James E. Christie (center) discusses the distribution of *The Upper Room* with hospital administrator Robert Guy and the hostess, Mrs. Dewey Odom.



Above, hospital hostess, and members of the hospital auxiliary prepare copies of *The Upper Room* for distribution to each patient in the hospital. Left to right: the hostess, Mrs. Dewey Odom; Mrs. Gordon Brame; and Mrs. John J. Koch.

Below, left, member of hospital auxiliary presents copy of *The Upper Room* to a patient. Left, Mrs. Ruth Jefferson; right, Mrs. J. C. Linder.

Below, right, copies of *The Upper Room* in the magazine stand in the lobby of the hospital. (This picture not posed; the man had actually put his coin into the slot.)

The Family Devotion's Committee of the First Methodist Church, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, has worked out a plan of distributing 150 copies of each issue of THE UPPER ROOM to the Baton Rouge General Hospital. This project has been in effect for more than a year and has proved so successful that plans are under way to increase this ministry to include the jails, the State School for the Blind, and other public institutions in the Baton Rouge Area. The program is under the supervision of Rev. James E. Christie, Associate Minister of the First Methodist Church.

The plan is illustrated by the pictures shown on this page. Concerning the response to this project, Mrs. Dewey Odom, Hostess at General Hospital, writes, "We find an excellent response to THE UPPER ROOM. Visitors have asked for them in the halls before they could be distributed. Patients have asked if they might purchase them. Everyone seems pleased that they are made available. And we at the hospital are happy that this spiritual ministry is being carried on."

From Rev. E. Dean Bergen, Chaplain, Baton Rouge General Hospital: "Each room in our hospital is supplied with a copy of THE UPPER ROOM, given by First Methodist Church, and a copy of the New Testament, by courtesy of the Gideons. We feel that this material gives every patient the opportunity to continue his daily devotional life while in the hospital. It also gives strength in time of distress. And there is always the possibility that some soul may be brought into the Kingdom of God by their use."

Rev. James E. Christie, Associate Minister, First Methodist Church writes, "A minister, in his visiting of the sick, is often reminded how long the days, and how strange the surroundings can be for the patients. It is our hope that the ministry of THE UPPER ROOM will help them to find spiritual as well as physical strength during their days in the hospital; that the presence of the familiar booklet by their bedsides will enable regular readers to continue their practice of daily devotions; and that many will begin there a habit of daily devotions which will mean much to them in the future."

Why Not Conduct a

Religious Census

Before Your Lenten

"Four Nights for God" Program?

A large community map aids the Religious Census.

THE major task of the Christian Church is to lead all persons to know and accept Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord and to bring them into membership in His Church. This means that every person who is outside the Christian fellowship is our responsibility and the object of our evangelistic approach. If the Church is to fulfill its Christ-commissioned task, we must discover the persons for whom we are responsible.

Evangelistic Challenge

The 1954 national church membership statistics reveal that 59 per cent of the people in the United States belong to some church or synagogue. This means that 41 per cent or 69,000,000 are outside the Church fellowship.

—In the average community one of every two adults is unchurched.

—In some areas of the nation less than 30 per cent of the population are related to the Church.

Another important factor is that more than 25,000,000 Americans *change residences* each year. Perhaps half of these are members of churches. They include former Sunday school teachers, youth leaders, officers of organizations, and members of choirs, church boards, and other groups. Community surveys in many sections reveal more unrelated persons with church memberships elsewhere than there are members in the local churchs.

The *primary* purpose of the Religious Census is to find the persons for whom each church is responsible. The only adequate method by which we can discover *all* of them is to go from house to house and secure the information. Halford E. Luccock once observed: "The Good Shepherd would not have known one sheep was missing if he had not taken a census."

Many new sections have grown up near our cities today. There is a need for new churches. The only accurate means of determining the scope of need and location for churches is to take a community Religious Census. In this way the names and addresses of all prospects for membership can be secured. In one such section only 54 out of 250 people were attending any church. Today a growing church serves that community.

When is a Religious Census *needed?*

In the average community a Religious Census is needed at least once every three years. Some city communities should be surveyed every year. Rural

populations are more stable than those in the city and do not require as frequent study.

In any event, the planning group should attempt to keep the census up to date annually.

The census is needed whenever the prospect list of the church drops below 20 per cent of the active membership. **It is especially needed by every church that is participating in the "Four Nights for God" program.**

Who?

Who should conduct the Census?

Wherever possible, it is better to plan the Census on an interdenominational basis. The Ministerial Association or local Council of Churches should be the sponsoring organization. Secure the co-operation of as many churches as possible. This will invite community-wide interest and provide adequate personnel for the actual census. Co-operation will permit better advertising, avoid repetition, and demonstrate Protestant solidarity. The more churches participating, the easier the undertaking will be.

A second pattern is for a group of churches of one denomination to plan and carry through a census on a community-wide or county-wide basis.

However, *if other churches are uninterested and slow-moving, an active church should not hesitate to put on the census alone.* In this case, the city "Block by Block Census" or the "Telephone Census" are recommended.

Where?

What territory should be covered in the Census?

In a city situation where the Census is conducted interdenominationally, the area should include the entire city and its contiguous suburbs. Care should be taken that no section is neglected.

Where the co-operation of a group of churches cannot be secured, a city church may conduct a "Block-by-Block" census. In this type the local church committee plans a survey of the territory immediately surrounding the church, within a designated number of blocks in every direction.

In small cities and rural communities the surrounding country areas should be included in the Census. In many cases a county-wide plan can be worked effectively. In making assignments no section should be left out. Special attention should be given to the "no man's land" between parishes.

In the denominational type census, the workers record on the census cards only those who are members of the specific denomination, or who may be prospects for membership.

RELIGIOUS CENSUS WORKER'S AGREEMENT

( ) I agree to help in taking the Religious Census planned by my church on _____

( ) I will also assist in the necessary follow-up work to complete the census during the next day or two.

NAME _____ TELEPHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

Please sign duplicate cards—one to remind you, and one for your church.

One of the necessary tools for the Religious Census is the "Religious Census Worker's Agreement" card. Shown here in reduced size, the card should be signed in duplicate by each visitor.

The "Friendly Community Study" card shown here in miniature reproduction, is used to record basic information about each family group interviewed.

FRIENDLY COMMUNITY STUDY
Young Married Couple ____
Not at Home ____
Vacant House ____

Address 1522 Jackson St.
Family Name Hargrave

Given Name	Age	Member What Church (Where if out of city)	Local Church Preference	Where Attend Sunday School
Mr. A. J.				
Mrs. Edna				
Children				
Gordon P.	16			
Jewell R.	13			
Harry	11			
Others				

What is the most convenient hour for church visitors to call on you? _____

Callers _____ Write additional information on other side.

Specific Suggestions

1) *Simultaneous Community Census*

This type may be conducted by one church in a small town or country community in three or four days, if sufficient workers can be secured. It is not advisable for a church to attempt this type in a large town or city.

2) *Block-by-Block Census*

This plan is highly recommended for a single church in a town or city. The distinguishing feature of this type census is that assignments are made to the workers by "blocks" *over a period of several weeks or months.* They work out from the local church in all directions. As the blocks are completed, new assignments are made, until the entire town or parish area is completed.

Follow-up work begins each week after the blocks are surveyed. This provides a continuous supply of prospects for the visitation evangelism committee. New members are received into the church regularly throughout the year. The training and assimilation program is more effective.

3) *Telephone Religious Census*

The newest type of community religious census is made by telephone. Several churches have used it with remarkable effectiveness. A church in Parma, Ohio, during a two weeks' period, made 7,245 phone calls and secured 526 prospects. The visitation evangelism workers called in 313 of the homes and secured 96 commitments. Attendance at Sunday school and church services increased 20 per cent.

The purpose of this type survey is to discover all *unchurched* persons in the community.

The telephone census can be utilized in city, town, or open country where telephone service is used by most of the people.

Organization

The Census may be a project of the local church Commission on Membership and Evangelism, the Official Board, or the Church Council. This group should

1. Officially adopt the Census
2. Determine the type of census and territory to be covered
3. Select dates
4. Provide necessary funds for materials
5. Select the Religious Census Committee. This project may be assigned to the Prospects Committee.

The Religious Census Committee for a Single Church

The committee may assign specific tasks and details of organization to smaller committees or individuals.

1. *Order* sufficient religious census materials from TIDINGS, 1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 5, Tennessee.
2. *Secure* a large map of the territory to be covered and block out smaller units.
   —Prepare "Friendly Community Study" assignment envelopes, covering the territory by units on the basis of blocks or sections or country roads. Enclose sufficient "Friendly Community Study" cards with a few extras. Draw map of assigned unit on the envelope.
   —Make asignments to teams of workers.
   —Keep careful record of all assignments and cards returned.
3. *Enlist* sufficient workers for the units. Each unit should contain 40 to 50 homes in the city and about 20 homes in the country.
   —Secure as many youth and young adults as possible.
   —Arrange for instruction conference.
4. *Publicize* the census through church bulletins, papers and letters. Have "minute speakers" in church and Sunday school.
5. *Sort* all census cards. Prepare duplicate cards for all families who are prospective members. Give to Membership and Evangelism Committee.
6. *Prepare* a complete report for the sponsoring group.
7. *Assist* in follow-up program.

A Community Census by Telephone

The Religious Census Committee will organize the telephone census.

1. *Order* sufficient "Friendly Community Study" cards on which to record information.
2. *Secure* a Telephone Directory covering the territory to be surveyed. In a city a "Street Address Telephone Directory" may be purchased. From this directory the committee selects only families on streets in the territory to be surveyed. These listings are cut out, pasted on separate sheets, and numbered consecutively.
3. *Arrange* installation of telephones in one room of the church for a one-month period. There should be one telephone for each 1,000 numbers listed in the directory of the area to be covered.
4. *Enlist* volunteers to make the calls.
   —The schedule should be divided into four daily shifts —10:00-11:30 A.M., 1:30-3:00 P.M., 3:30-5:00 P.M. and 7:00-9:00 P.M. Estimate the number of days necessary to complete the list.
   —Volunteers may be enlisted at the church services.
   —Youth groups, Woman's Society circles, Sunday school classes, and other groups can be assigned specific shifts.
   —Men and employed persons may take the evening periods.
   —Some shut-ins may be enlisted to make calls.
5. *Appoint* supervisor for each period of calling, who will give instructions and materials to workers and file information cards.
6. *Make* suggestions to callers.
   —Use a friendly, well-modulated tone of voice. Always be courteous.
   —"Mrs. Jones, I'm calling from ———— Church. We are taking a church census of our community. Are you an active member of a church in ————?"

   If the answer is "yes," say 'Thank you, we are happy to know that you are a member of the Christian felowship."

   If the answer is "no," then say, "A team of members from our church would like to call in your home soon." (Always make this statement in the affirmative; they will soon tell you if they aren't interested.)

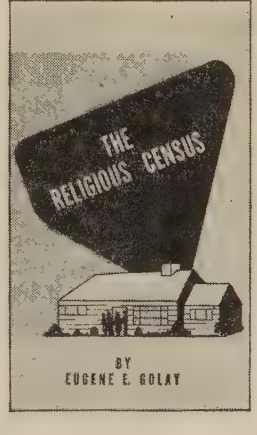
   Continue the conversation, securing as much information as is easily possible—church membership, children's names, ages, convenient time to call, other items the person may give that will be helpful to visitors.

   Fill in family name, address, and telephone number from the directory.

   —When there is no answer to the call, write down name and number on "Call back" sheets. "Call backs" may be made during another period.
7. *Pass* census cards to the Visitation Evangelism Committee for immediate follow-up in the "Four Nights for God" program.

The Religious Census

By EUGENE E. GOLAY



A helpful "how" book pointing up effective ways of taking the religious census. Based on the experience of thousands of churches.

10c each: 6 for 50c

TIDINGS

Headquarters for Evangelistic Materials
1908 Grand Ave., Nashville 5, Tenn.

A CHURCH BEGINS WITH PRAYER

by George C. Megill
Fellowship Methodist Church
Hamlet, North Carolina

Fellowship Methodist Church began as an item in the budget of First Methodist Church in Hamlet the Conference year of 1952-53, when First Church set aside money for the purchase of a site for a new Methodist church in the fastest growing suburb of Hamlet, North Carolina, a town of around 10,000 population.

In February, 1954, an afternoon Sunday school, started under the sponsorship of First Church, met in the Fairview Heights School. There were 112 at the first meeting of this Sunday school. Many of these had already attended Sunday school that morning at First Church. Howard McLamb, pastor of First Church, served as superintendent of the new Sunday school. Meanwhile, First Church had purchased a 1¾-acre lot at 1108 McDonald Avenue as a site for the new church. From February through June, this afternoon Sunday school averaged around 50 in attendance.

The first worship service was held at the schoolhouse, June 6, 1954, on Pentecost Sunday with Mr. McLamb preaching.

Having led in a building program in the construction of a new church—Westover Methodist Church in Raleigh—on July 1, I was assigned as pastor of the new church. On July 4 we had our first worship service and morning Sunday school under the leadership of the new pastor. There were 42 at Sunday school and 61 at morning worship. From this start services built up to an average to more than 100 at both Sunday school and morning worship in September, when the new church was officially organized.

On August 31, at a fish fry at the home of Mr. Hoyt Terry, a Methodist Men's Club was organized. Fourteen persons joined the new organization. Thus, a Methodist Men's group was organized before the church was organized. Mr. Robert Johnson was elected president.

Atmosphere of Prayer

A prayer meeting was held every week after the new pastor came to the church. The prayer meeting group and the Methodist Men helped to plan a tent revival on the church site (September 12-19) to create an atmosphere of prayer and to establish a high spiritual plane for the organization of the new church. Members of Methodist Men sacrificially raised the money necessary to rent the tent. After that was arranged, they got the necessary chairs, made a pulpit and choir platform, and borrowed a piano. An old pump organ was hooked up to a vacuum cleaner motor to provide musical accompaniment.

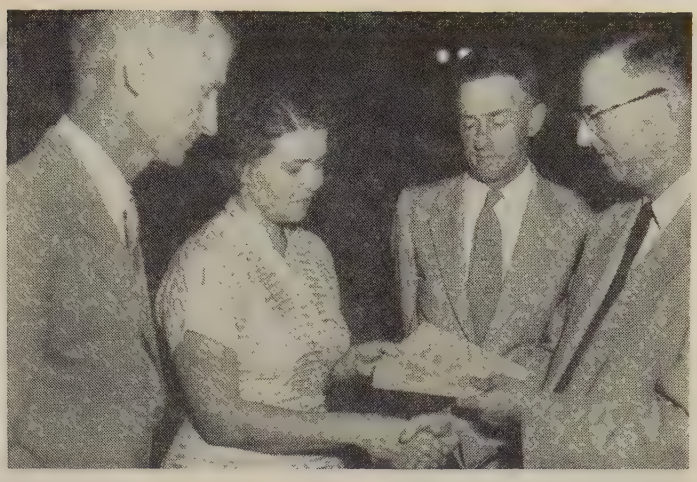
An interdenominational prayer group, which had been meeting at 6:30 A.M. every morning during the summer in various churches in Hamlet, was invited to meet at the tent the week of the revival. Composed of and led principally by laymen, this group had been instrumental in winning a number of men to Christ. Meeting at the tent, with more than 40 men attending each morning, it did much to make the revival a success.

Following an idea mentioned in one of the issues of Shepherds, a 15-minute prayer service, with music providing an inspirational background, was held just before the revival services each night. The lights within the tent were turned out, except for a lighted cross and a light for the pianist and organist; and people prayed in their seats or came to the altar rail beneath the cross to pray during this period. This provided an inspirational background for the rest of the revival services. The pastor of the new church preached the revival. All of the offerings received went to the building fund, to be used later to erect a church where the tent now stood. Over 1,200 people attended the week's revival at the tent. More than $300 was added to the building fund of the new church.

The revival services were climaxed on Saturday night with an all-night prayer vigil designed to set the proper spiritual atmosphere for the organization of the new church on the day fol-

Charter members of the new Fellowship Methodist Church, Hamlet, North Carolina.

Leaders in the formation of Fellowship Church are (left to right) G. C. Megill, pastor of Fellowship Church; O. L. Hathaway, District Superintendent, Fayetteville District; and Howard McLamb, pastor of First Methodist Church, Hamlet.



Rev. Howard McLamb (right) hands the deeds to the church lot to the trustees of Fellowship Church (left to right), Mr. Hoyt Terry, Mrs. Robert Johnson, and Mr. Clarence Yates.

lowing. The prayer service was patterned after that held at the Methodist Men's Convocation at Purdue. The night was divided into 15-minute watches. Persons were asked to sign up for a specified period during the night. The lights were all extinguished inside the tent, with the exception of the lighted cross, and sacred music was played softly on records. The Saturday night revival service concluded with over 100 Christians gathering around the altar to sing, "Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow." The prayer vigil began about 10:00 P.M. At 11:00 P.M. nearly 20 men knelt at the altar. In the wee hours of the morning only a few were present to keep the prayer vigil, with men in pairs, or a husband and wife together, or a mother kneeling at the foot of the cross as she carried her sleeping child in her arms. The prayer service was concluded at 6:30 A.M., with the men gathering for their regular morning prayer service.

This prayer vigil created a Pentecostal atmosphere for the organization of the new church. After an inspiring message on the subject, "Friends of Jesus," by O. L. Hathaway, the District Superintendent, the new church was organized with 103 members on September 19, 1954. It was truly inspirational to see men, women, and children baptized. Nearly the whole congregation came forward to take the vows of membership by transfer of letter. Sound movies were taken of this event to fix it in the memories of all. Dinner on the grounds, under the shade of the tent, climaxed the day. The supper room of the tent had an "upper room" atmosphere. The pastor went to bed that night tired and happy.

"I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."

Life's Richest Experience

by Gerald E. Bisbee

Pastor, Grace Methodist Church

Oelwein, Iowa

TALKING to the pastor at the church door, a businessman was groping for words. He had just witnessed a re-enactment of the upper room experience. It was obvious that the Maundy evening communion service had moved him deeply. "I felt I was there with Jesus," he said. "I was right there when He prayed and taught. When Judas left, I wanted to catch him and hold him back. I wanted to help. . . ." He groped again for words. Then he blurted out, "This was my life's . . . my richest experience!"

It Happened in Church

Few, if any, had ever heard this rather hard-headed, successful businessman stumble verbally in such fashion before a group of people. He was always self-sufficient. But in this one service his casual feeling toward the Christian religion became a personal experience with Christ. In his own words, it was "life's richest experience," and it happened in church!

The Maundy Thursday communion service had received so much publicity —by newspaper, radio, church paper, and, best of all, by word of mouth— that he felt he had to come to see for himself. The result was a changed life. A man who rarely attended church became a regular attendant. He became active in various activities of the church. This simple, yet dramatic, presentation of Jesus' upper room experience has vital power for today.

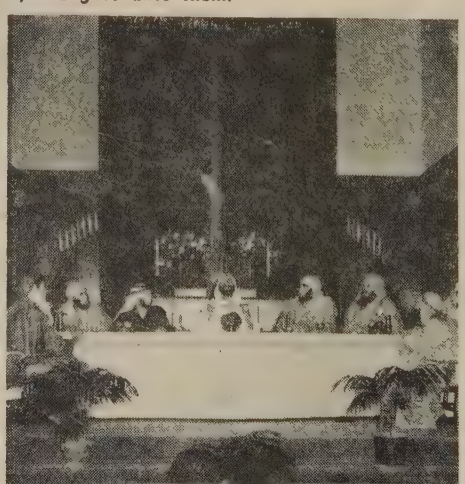
Here's a brief outline of the evening:

The Last Supper is re-enacted before the people in candlelight. (See SHEPHERDS, April, 1952). The upper room is prepared at the front of the sanctuary with the essential elements—table, seats, cloth, bread, grape juice, etc. The characters, representing Jesus and the disciples, dressed in oriental costumes (any robes will do) come down the aisles through the congregation. (This makes the congregation feel more a part of the event.) As they enter the

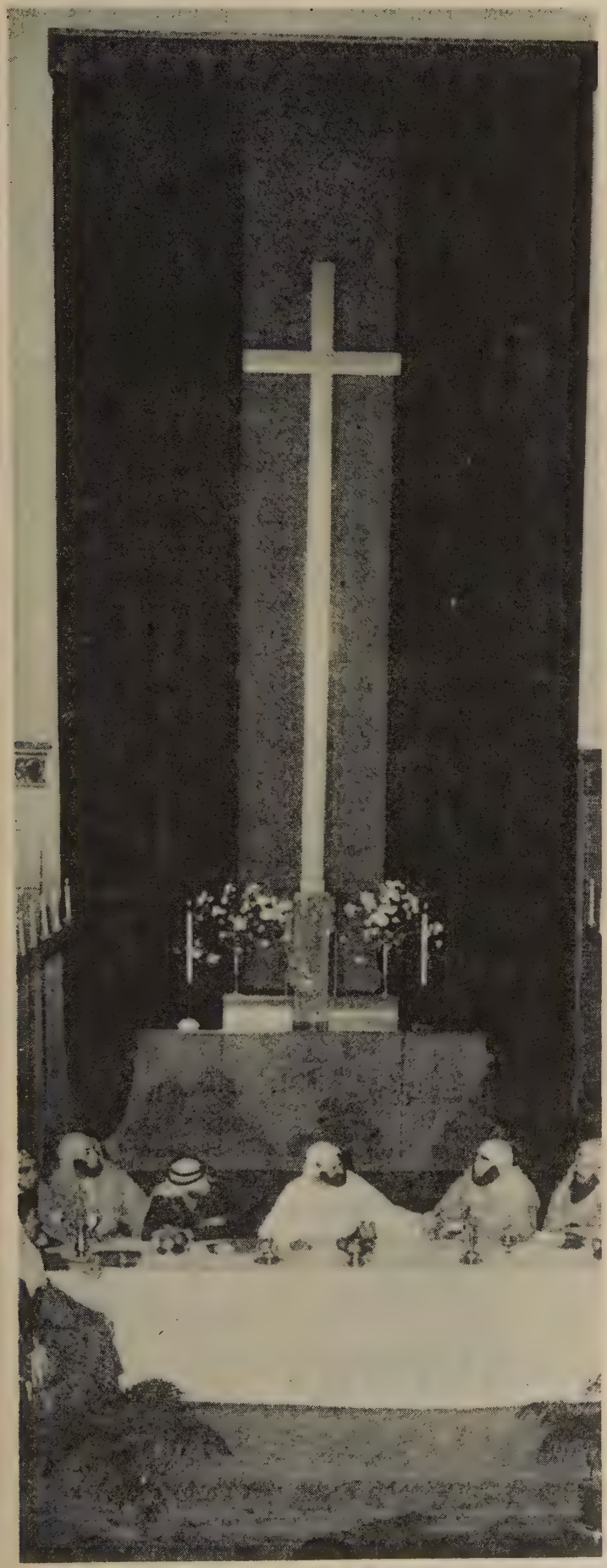
(*Continued on page 18*)

"I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer."

"And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them."



"And he took the cup and gave thanks."



Left: "When the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him."

Above: "Go and prepare us the passover that we may eat."

Above: "After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet."

Below: "For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come."

upper room, the disciples greet Jesus and lay off their outer robes. Jesus immediately begins to wash their feet, with appropriate response of awe, and defiance (upon the part of Peter).

They then take seats at the table and Jesus begins to teach. The characters do not speak, but pantomime. The voice of the narrator comes through a speaker usually placed under the table. The pastor or a selected layman reads the scriptural story through a microphone (from a point where he can see the portrayal). The breaking of the bread and the blessing of the cup are made hallowed moments of devotion. Jesus continues to teach; and as he does, he walks around them, occasionally touching a shoulder, arm, or head. This adds a personal intimate touch.

Communion Self-Administered

Jesus then seats himself at the table, and the people come to the altar rail for communion, self-administered. They are allowed to come and go as they please and to stay as long as they wish. This is an important part of the service.

After all have communed, Jesus rises at the table, with arms outstretched over his disciples and with his head uplifted, and prays for his disciples. The servants then help them into their cloaks and they depart, following Jesus. All are quiet and bowed.

After the "Amen" the simple scriptural words, "When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples." The last words the congregation hears are those of the narrator. "Let not the silence be broken as you leave, following Jesus to your Gethsemane. Live each moment as He lived it—follow Him as He bows in agonized prayer—as He is taken and tried—as He is beat and spit upon—as He is condemned and crucified. Kneel at the foot of His Cross during the black sorrowful moments of the crucifixion. Then return on Easter morn. Follow Jesus to the Cross—and beyond."

Across the seven years that this service has been used in its present form, thousands of people have been won to more vital Christian living; hundreds of churches have lifted their programs with this simple, creative service; and many communities have become strikingly aware of the Church.

Last year an unfaithful woman was so moved that she changed her ways and dedicated her life to Christian living. An alcoholic committed himself to abstinence, and one of the men who portrayed a disciple hired him and has helped keep him on the right path. Two years ago a young man found the communion table the place where he could make an important decision. Today he is studying for the ministry. Another businessman, who thought churches stuffy and sermons dry and boring, has today a perfect attendance record at worship. Countless hundreds have testified that the upper room experience has made Christ a vital force in their lives.

The elements used in the drama are not mingled in any way with those served to the congregation by the pastor.

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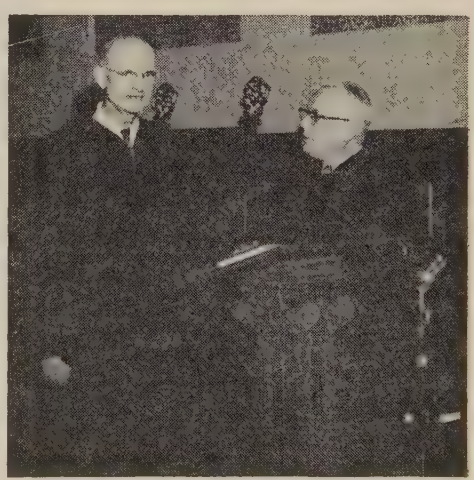
RECENT UPPER ROOM CHAPEL SPEAKERS AND GUESTS

Dr. Charles S. Braden, left, noted lecturer, world traveler, and authority in the field of History and Literature of Religions, was a recent speaker in the Upper Room Chapel. Dr. Braden was guest lecturer at Scarritt College for Christian Workers and is shown being introduced to that group by Dr. Hugh C. Stuntz, president of the college.

Rev. K. E. Eriksson of Norway, a missionary in Southern Rhodesia, who is this year doing graduate work at Drew University. Mr. Eriksson is an enthusiastic user of *The Upper Room* and is familiar with it in many languages.

The Conference Directors of Youth of The Methodist Church were welcomed guests to the Upper Room Chapel. Shown above, left to right, are: Vernon C. French, Franklin, N. H.; William R. Wright, Maine; Mae Sigler, Nebraska; Arthur Newcomb, New England Conference; Richard Colby, New England Southern.



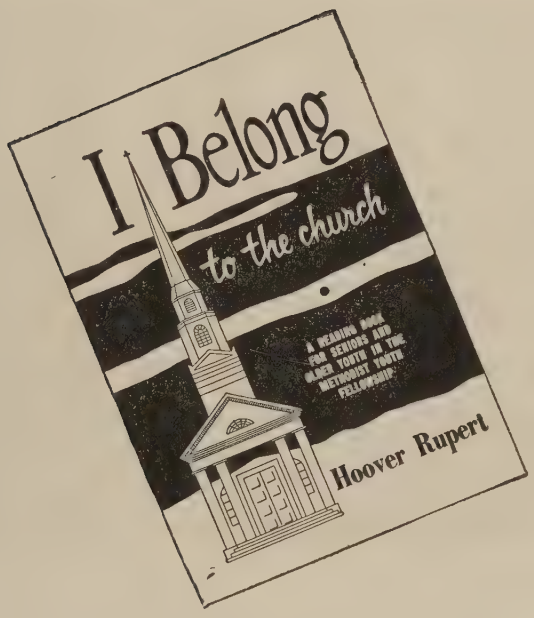
Dr. A. B. Mackey, president of Trevecca College, Nashville, is shown as he is being introduced in the Upper Room Chapel by Dr. J. Manning Potts, Editor of *The Upper Room* and dean of the Chapel.

From *Scope* Magazine: "Any trip to Nashville, Tenn., is incomplete unless one includes in it a visit to the Upper Room Chapel, Board of Evangelism Building. We simply cannot find the adjectives to describe its beauty and serenity; in every detail it is a fitting symbol of the Christ-centered church. Methodists, indeed, should be proud of this Chapel."

The 1955

LENTEN READING PROJECT

in the Methodist Youth Emphasis



The Special Book

I BELONG

by Hoover Rupert

About the Church

For Seniors and Older Youth

Published by

Youth Department

General Board of Education

It is the purpose of the Youth Emphasis of The Methodist Church "to help all youth discover the will of God and live by it." Three things are required to do this, namely, (1) strengthening the faith, (2) winning youth to Christ, and (3) improving the MYF.

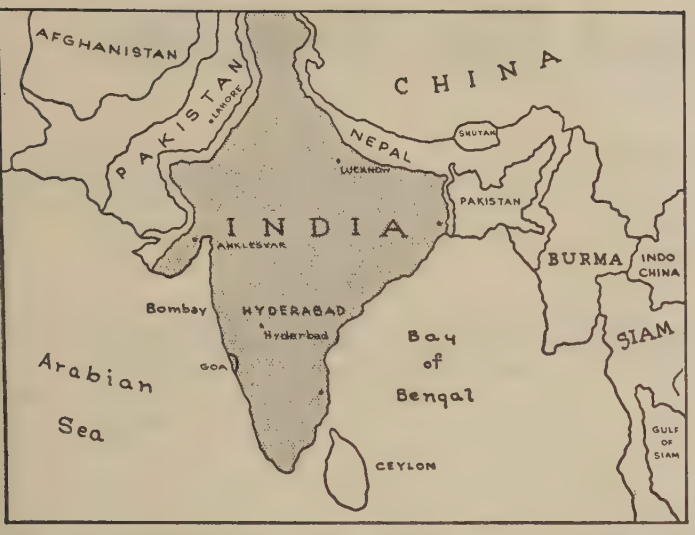
The regular on-going, week-by-week program and activities of the MYF in every local church must seek to meet these three great needs. In addition to the regular MYF activities, therefore, a special Church-wide "Lenten Reading Project" is recommended.

This year the special book offered to Methodist Youth for the Reading Project is *I Belong*, by Hoover Rupert. About the Church, the book is for seniors and older youth. It is available in a pocket-sized edition, presented in a very attractive and readable form. The book is published by the Youth Department, the General Board of Education.

I Belong, with its challenge to young people, is a companion book to Nevin C. Harner's *I Believe*, the Lenten Reading Project book for last year.

I Belong may be ordered from The Methodist Publishing House serving you. (No. 2423-BC—35c single copy; 30c each for 10 or more copies. Order on consignment if desired.) Send to Youth Department, Box 871, Nashville 2, Tennessee, for free leaflet about the Lenten Reading Project (No. 2424-B) and for a simple discussion guide in using the book in mid-week services and similar activities.

Two New Languages Added to the World Fellowship of The Upper Room



Map of India and territory indicates the cities where four Upper Room editions are published.

THE two most recent other language editions of THE UPPER ROOM are Gujurati and Cebuano. Gujurati is one of the major languages of India. It was the mother-tongue of Mahatma Gandhi. But Gujurati is not only the provincial language of the people of Gujurati but is well known throughout India because it is used for business purposes and is also the language in which the accounting systems are recorded.

The region of Gujurat lies just northwest of Bombay and along the western coast of India. The people are a very religious and thrifty people. In this section of India, there are many Christian converts belonging to the various Church denominations. It is here that The Methodist Church has one of its best Annual Conferences.

Rev. P. G. Bhagat is the editor of the Gujurati edition. Rev. Bhagat is a leader in the Church of the Brethren Mission. The Gujurat Tract and Book Society, which is the union body of all the Missions and Churches in Gujurat, sponsors this edition.

There are now four language editions, of THE UPPER ROOM being circulated in India—Hindi, Telegu, Gujurati, and English. Just to the north of India in Pakistan THE UPPER ROOM is translated into the Urdu language. The Urdu language is used widely in northern India and Pakistan.

The Urdu edition is published in Lahore, Pakistan, with Canon Chandu Ray, of the Anglican Church, as editor. Publication began late in 1952 under the sponsorship of the West Pakistan Christian Council. It is published in the official "Persian Script" of Pakistan. The copy is manuscripted and reproduced by plates made from manuscript.

The Telegu edition is published in Hyderabad, India, with Rev. G. Prakasham as editor and under the sponsorship of the Hyderabad State Christian Council of the United Church of South India. Publication began in 1953, and the printing is done by the Lutheran Press. The Telegu language is spoken by 30 million Indians in Central and South India. Next to Hindi, it is considered to be the most widely used in daily conversation. The largest group speaking Telegu is in Madras.

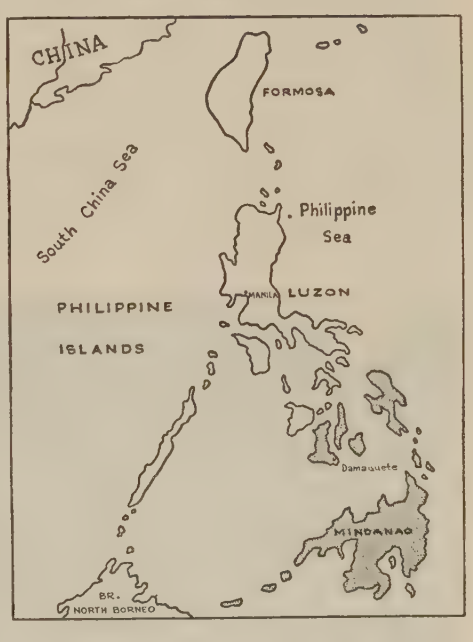
The Hindi and English editions are published in Lucknow, India. Rev. W. W. Bell is the editor and both are sponsored by the Methodist Publishing House of Lucknow with international suport. Hindi is spoken and understood fairly well all over India. It is a very ancient language—considered to be one of the most ancient of languages in all the world. Hindi is very rich in vocabulary, thus, most religious books of the Hindus are in Hindi. This edition has replaced the old Hindustani edition of THE UPPER ROOM.

Cebuano

The demand for THE UPPER ROOM in the Philippine Islands has resulted in its being translated into a third Philippine dialect, the Cebuano. Miss Doris E. Hess writing from the Philippines says, "There are thousands of Cebuano-speaking people in this land and the new edition shall mean a great deal to them in the family altar work and to them as growing Christians. At the same time, this arrangement has brought our major churches together in a Christian service greatly needed throughout the Philippines."

The Cebuano-speaking people are located in the Southern Islands, about 500 miles south of Manila. This area is primarily served by the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. Bishop Proculo A. Rodriquez of the United Church of Christ is the editor. This edition is sponsored by the United Church in co-operation with the Methodist Literature Committee in the Philippines and in cooperation with the Extension Department of Silliman University.

The other dialect editions in the Philippines are the Tagalog and the Iocano. These editions are published by the Methodist Literature Committee in the Philippines. It is estimated that THE UPPER ROOM is now reaching over 80,000 people in the Philippines.



The shaded section of the Philippine Islands shows the area in which the new Cebuano edition is primarily circulated.

A United Front That Got Results

By W. R. HUNT
Pasadena, Texas

What happens when an industrial town of 34,000 population tries to increase church attendance? Methods and results both depend upon who is behind the movement and how well the teams pull together.

Pasadena, Texas, an industrial town near Houston on the Ship Channel, is surrounded by heavy industries. The Pasadena people decided to make a united effort to increase church attendance when a Nation-Wide Crusade for Church Attendance started in January, 1954. Net result was that Pasadena sprang to the front immediately and is continuing the work.

Interdenominational Movement

The effort was *not* a temporary rocket shot that soared high and exploded in a brilliant display that faded out. It was an interdenominational movement, with all Protestant churches that are members of the Ministerial Alliance participating. Twenty-seven churches of various denominations took part. The entire picture was one of a harmonious whole. Let's center on the First Methodist Church of Pasadena, as that will give a good idea of what happened all over the town.

Nance B. Crawford is pastor of First Methodist. Joe B. Wells is associate pastor and Bob Joiner, assistant pastor. Nance B. Crawford is a man not apt to be caught off base in any church movement. He worked on a Mississippi River steamboat in his younger days, reformed and went into law practice for a few years. When he was 34, he entered the ministry.

With that sort of background and with considerable emotional maturity he did *not* see people as "stuffed shirt big shots," or "goons from former picket lines." He saw human beings, often confused and needing guidance through the anxieties of life—people who in many instances were struggling desperately for peace of mind and not knowing how to start on that road. The Church had satisfying values to offer, and it was his business to let that be known to all.

There are 53 civic organizations and clubs of various sorts in Pasadena. Every one of these clubs got behind the movement to increase church attendance.

Financial aid was needed. A. H. Ueckert, of the Asbury Methodist Church, who is a real estate man, was chairman of a committee to look after finances. Almost immediately financial aid came from the Rotary Club, the Kiwanis Club, the Optimist, the Down-Town Lions, the Night Lions, the Junior Chamber of Commerce, the Volunteer Fire Department, the Elks, and the Oil Workers Local No. 367, C.I.O. The Oil Workers Local No. 367 has a membership of around 5,000.

Then, when a man experienced in advertising and publicity was needed, Al Levine, a merchant of the Jewish faith, stepped in and handled that part in a professional manner.

By the time the movement was started the backers had buttons reading, "I am going," on half the lapels in Pasadena. (The answer, of course, was "to church.")

There were well designed display cards, of several types, in almost every store window. A large percentage of Pasadena automobiles carried advertising bumper stickers, which attracted considerable attention, not only in Pasadena, but also in Houston. Several big billboards on highways at the edge of town carried the church attendance advertising.

Mr. Crawford decided to have three sermons each Sunday morning: one beginning at 8:40, one at 9:50, and one at 11:00, as well as a service on Sunday night. His church seats 390 persons. The 11:00 o'clock service is the one that draws the heaviest attendance. Almost every Sunday folks are turned away because the church cannot seat them. Even the 8:40 A.M. sermon is usually preached to a full house.

Then on Sunday, January 24, Mr. Crawford started a Spiritual Life Revival, with W. W. Hawthorne, pastor of the First Methodist Church of Nacogdoches, Texas, as guest speaker. Mr. Hawthorne is a noted evangelist. He preached in a crowded house at almost every service during the week.

Major Increases

Exact results are difficult to determine, but conservative estimates from both ministers and church members indicates that church attendance all over Pasadena increased by 20 per cent. In the First Methodist, a 20 per cent increase would be a very conservative statement.

Splendid cooperation was given by the three Pasadena newspapers and by the nearby Houston daily newspapers. All these papers carried enough news of the movement to sustain interest and let the public know what was going on.

The pastors and members of the First Methodist Church liked the plan so well that they decided to carry it on through to Easter.

At the 11:00 a.m. service, First Methodist Church, Pasadena, Texas, the crowd overflowed the Sanctuary

After---

A SPIRITUAL LIFE MISSION

"There's more power here than I have ever had within my reach!" said the pastor. He was holding in his hands the covenants which were made during a Spiritual Life Mission. He was thinking of what might happen if the decisions to tithe, to witness, to serve, to pray, etc., were to be directed into the regular program of the church. There was power there, that was sure!

Hundreds of pastors are facing a similar opportunity. People by the thousands have made definite decisions that they will deepen their spiritual experience by a devotion to the Holy Habits. Some of them made the decision after a period of serious consideration. A study of the covenants made in churches throughout the country indicates that church members think seriously, and are selective, when they make their decisions. They are not indiscriminate. Because they made the covenant in a spirit of dedication, it is essential that they be helped to put their signed agreement into daily practice.

Take the matter of family devotions. Strange as it may seem, many people are perplexed about what they should do by way of daily devotions in the home. When they are confronted by problems of a suitable time for such a practice, or by problems of what material they should use to satisfy the needs of children whose ages vary from three to 18, they are apt to be discouraged. They need guidance and direction. They need encouragement—not once or twice—but again and again.

No church in which a sizable number of members makes a covenant for family devotions should fail to offer at least one dramatization of an actual family sharing the experience. Material for family use, and helpful suggestions in the church calendar, should be part of the follow-up in every church.

Take the matter of tithing. Unless pastors, or select groups of laymen, have been crusaders for tithing, it is probable that the majority of church members will be mystified by what is meant by tithing. Even some who make a covenant to tithe will be ignorant of the implications involved in the practice. In a church in Michigan a layman told a guest minister that he had never heard of tithing until the guest minister preached on the theme. The man made a covenant to tithe. Obviously, he needed guidance and encouragement during the weeks which followed. He needed to be instructed by the study of such books as *Spiritual Life Through Tithing,* by G. Ernest Thomas, or *Stewardship and the Tithe,* by Bishop Costen J. Harrell.

Take the matter of witnessing. It would be a tragedy if nothing were done to help the people who made a covenant to witness for Christ. It should be obvious that they need to be used in regular programs of visitation evangelism and that they should be encouraged to witness every day through their business or social relationships. There is power available for a church which will use the dedication of those who have promised to witness for Christ.

Take the matter of church attendance. It would be tragic if the decisions for regular church attendance did not lead the pastor to evaluate his preaching to discover whether he is presenting God's truth in such a manner that worshipers are blessed when they attend or to see if those decisions did not lead the Official Board to examine the program of the church to discover whether it is meeting its challenge adequately.

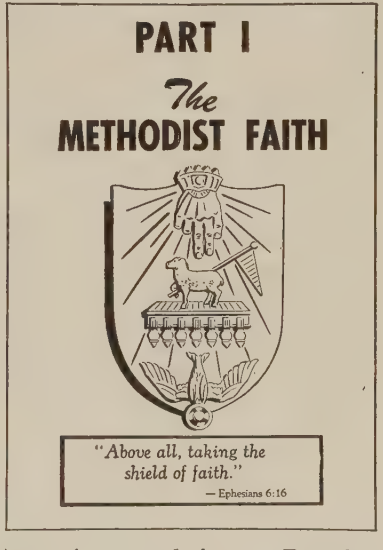
Take the matter of prayer. Church members who make a decision to pray regularly need help in their prayer life. Special objects for prayer should be suggested. Prayer groups should be established. There is power for the Kingdom in the decisions which are made to pray, but the power has to be harnessed and not allowed to be dissipated.

Hundreds of pastors and lay leaders in the Membership and Evangelism Commission have come away from a Spiritual Life Mission with a realization that something more is needed if the decisions are to be made permanent. The experience emphasizes the need for a trained church membership. It points out the dangers which are involved in receiving people into the Christian fellowship when they are ignorant concerning Methodist beliefs or concerning the obligations which are assumed when one becomes part of the Methodist fellowship. The covenants made in a Spiritual Life Mission underline the need for study groups, prayer fellowships, neighborhood groups, etc.

Leaflets and books are available from The Methodist Publishing House and from TIDINGS. By these a more intelligent and dedicated church membership may be created. Many churches are finding extraordinary help by the use of the new chart *Spiritual Life for Methodist Christians.* It is being used with the Official Board, with study groups in homes, with classes for church members, and in many other ways.

A Spiritual Life Mission is a beginning, not an ending. It emphasizes the Holy Habits as essential parts of the life of every Christian. But it goes farther than mere emphasis upon these historical and Biblical devotional practices. It enlists men and women and youth in a covenant to observe them.

Many pastors are discovering and using the tremendous power and potential leadership which was unearthed in the Spiritual Life Mission. They are accepting with gratitude the covenants which were made and are moving forward to utilize these dedications in building the Christian fellowship.



A sample page of the new Turn Over Chart, "Spiritual Life for Methodist Christians," is shown above in miniature. The chart has been widely acclaimed by both pastors and people.

Every Church Can Use

"THE SPIRITUAL LIFE FELLOWSHIP PLAN"

To Develop Disciples

THERE is no substitute for a personal contact with people. This is true in business; it is true in politics. It is no less true within the church. Members need constant personal relationships with their church and its organizations, and with persons within the fellowship, if they are to remain active in their interest and support.

The Spiritual Life Fellowship Plan enables the church to maintain a seven-day a week interest and concern for every member of the church. When it is effectively organized it is impossible for a church member to be sick or in trouble, or to grow negligent in his duties to God and the church, without the church being aware of the problem, and without an attempt by the laymen and the minister to correct the situation. The Spiritual Life Fellowship Plan is the way to build churchmanship among the members of the fellowship.

What Is It?

The plan is not new. It has been used in many churches under the name of the "zone," or "block," or "unit" plan. The new element in the Spiritual Life Fellowship Plan is that the duties of a "leader" have been carefully listed, and a simple literature has been prepared by which the plan can be put into effect in any church without excessive effort or expense.

Putting the matter briefly, the Spiritual Life Fellowship Plan is a practical and helpful way by which a church can maintain a personal interest in every member of the church. It is proving, also, an effective way to win new people for Christ. The Fellowship Leader not only gives guidance to members of the church within his block or district, but he is alert to discover those who have no church connection, or who have moved recently into the district. He endeavors to reach those persons for Christ and His Church.

The average Protestant pastor in 1955 is faced by an almost impossible situation when he tries to call regularly on all the members of the church. Usually he finds that the sick calls, the emergency situations, and the visits upon new people utilize most of the time which he can devote to pastoral work. The wise pastor recognizes that he needs help with the regular visiting, and that the use of laymen is the answer.

The Spiritual Life Fellowship Plan enables a church to appoint Fellowship Leaders for each group of about twenty members. Usually the assignment is made on a geographical basis—a block, rural road, district, etc. But sometimes the assignments may be made according to interests—young adults, shut-ins, youth, etc.

Duties of Fellowship Leaders

The duties of Spiritual Life Fellowship Leaders differ with the varied needs of a local community. In general, however, it can be said that the following are the major responsibilities of those who are assigned to lead a Unit or Zone:

1. To feel and to demonstrate a continued sense of responsibility for every member of the church school and of the church who resides within his area;
2. To encourage church attendance and interest in the church program by contacting frequently those members who are absent;
3. To learn of sickness, or of any emergency situations which require pastoral service, and to report that need to the pastor;
4. To maintain a steady interest and concern for the shut-ins and invalids in the "zone";
5. To show an interest in the inactive or indifferent members of the church, realizing that they constitute a special responsibility;
6. To publicize special services and events in the church by the use of the telephone and by visitation;
7. To distribute, or arrange for the distribution of, such literature as THE UPPER ROOM and *The Christian Advocate,* devotional tracts, stewardship information, or church envelopes;

Spiritual Life Fellowship Leaders visit to win persons to Christ.

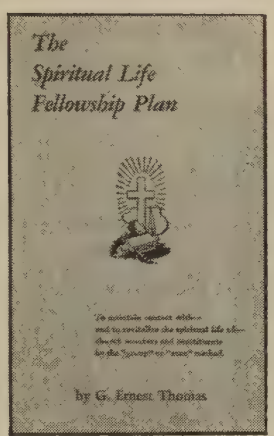
8. To visit and seek to win those in the families of members who have not committed their lives to Christ; to keep a list of those who reside in the area, but who have no interest in any church; and to seek to win such persons for Christ, working in cooperation with the pastor and the Commission on Membership and Evangelism;
9. To encourage church fellowships on a neighborhood basis, helping people in the group to get acquainted with and really know each other;
10. To cultivate new people who move into the community;
    a. By making a friendly call immediately, or by arranging for someone else to do it;
    b. By inviting them to attend church and church school, or by helping them to become acquainted in the church of their choice;
    c. By visiting those who are not Christians in order to lead them to accept Jesus Christ.
11. To assist the pastor in planning for and conducting fellowship and study groups to discuss and receive help in the practice of prayer, Bible reading, tithing, and witnessing.

Using the Tools

Simple but adequate tools have been prepared by TIDINGS to enable any church to put the Spiritual Life Plan into effect. It includes a folder for the General Chairman as well as "Kits" for each Fellowship Leader (one person or a couple for every 20 members). The Kit includes a leaflet, "This Is My Task," which describes clearly what the leader is to do. It also includes simple report forms of contacts made during the month and other literature which will be helpful. The cost of the material varies according to the size of the church, and may be ordered by sending merely the number of members in the church. The cost of all the necessary materials is between two and three cents per member.

Building Churchmanship

Any church is stronger if its members receive constant encouragement and help from others who are a part of the fellowship. And, conversely, church members grow in their own faith as they are privileged to be concerned about others. The Spiritual Life Fellowship Plan meets both these needs. It assures every member that he will be remembered whenever he especially needs spiritual help and encouragement. It helps, too, many men and women in their position as Fellowship Leaders.



To Deepen the Spiritual Life

of Every Member

and Strengthen Every New Member

The ideal way to order the necessary materials, "tools," for the **Spiritual Life Fellowship Plan** is to order the complete **Fellowship Plan Packet** for your church for only 2¢ per resident member. (If you desire to use the *Spiritual Life Covenant Cards* in connection with the Plan, order them separately at $1.00 per 100, using a card for each member.)

This Packet contains a "Fellowship Leader's Kit," completely made up with a sufficient number of copies of five different items, for every 20 members. Also with this will be two copies each of the Fellowship Plan booklet, the Chairman's Folder, and sufficient blanks for listing your Fellowship Leaders.

Give membership totals when ordering.

Separate Items

When the Fellowship Plan Packet is not ordered, the price of individual items is as follows:

SPIRITUAL LIFE FELLOWSHIP PLAN BOOKLET
—Two copies come free in the Packet ..... 10¢ each

"CHAIRMAN'S FOLDER" ..... 10¢ each
—This is the empty folder without the booklets and other materials.

BLANKS FOR LISTING "FELLOWSHIP LEADERS"
—These come free in the Packet ..... 2¢ each

"FELLOWSHIP LEADER'S RECORD" (optional) ..... 1¢ each
—A sample comes free in the Packet. Order one for each member.

"FELLOWSHIP LEADER'S KIT," the complete "Kit" .... 40¢ each for each Fellowship Leader—with 20 members.

TIDINGS: Headquarters for Evangelistic Materials

1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 5, Tennessee

Communion to Shut-ins By Means of the Radio

To help the sick and shut-in feel the oneness of the fellowship of the Church, the Epworth Methodist Church of Marion, Ohio, Walter C. Eyster, minister, served the elements, on World Wide Communion Sunday and the first Sunday of the New Year, to approximately 100 sick and shut-in persons by means of the radio.

The elements for the service were brought to the homes of the sick and shut-in as a part of the Christian Witness program of the members of the Youth Fellowships. The young people were present on the Saturday afternoon previous in preparation for the service.

The communion service was read by the minister, Mr. Eyster, assisted by the parish minister, Sheridan T. Walker, over the local radio station of Marion, WMRN. Mr. Eyster writes concerning the service: "This was a new and different undertaking for us. We have been trying to find out if other churches have used the radio in this way. Our older people who were served the elements in this way and were a part of the Sunday morning congregation called in and reported a great spiritual experience. . . . The youth had a great time calling on these folks."

Mrs. Relvie Sifritt of Marion, Ohio, pictured above, keeps her own house from a wheel chair and is a daily reader of *The Upper Room*. She was one of the shut-ins served communion by means of the radio.

Shown left is the communion dedication service for the Youth Fellowship Christian Witness Program. The Youth Fellowships assisted in the radio communion for the sick and shut-ins held by the Epworth Methodist Church, Marion, Ohio. Rev. Walter C. Eyster, minister of the church, is seen to the left of the altar. He is assisted by Rev. Sheridan Walker.

Shown below is part of the Sunday morning worship service of the Epworth Church where families are urged to attend as families.

NEW STATISTICS

on Church Membership

Religious Gains Exceed Population Increase

A total membership of 94,842,845 persons in 255 religious bodies on *Continental United States* is reported by official church statisticians in a compilation of "the latest information," appearing in the *Yearbook of American Churches,* just published by the National Council of Churches.

This is a gain of 2.8 per cent over the figures compiled a year earlier. The population gain was 1.7 per cent. The number of Protestant members reported increased 3 per cent over the previous annual figure; the number of Roman Catholics reported increased 4 per cent. Most bodies reported figures for 1953.

The total church membership is at a new high; also the proportion of church members in the population is at a new high of over 59.5 per cent.

The number of local churches reported by all faiths is 294,359, a gain of 1.5 per cent.

The six major groups reported members as follows:

Buddhist	63,000
Old Catholic and Polish National Catholic	366,088
Eastern Orthodox	2,100,171
Jewish	5,000,000
Roman Catholic	31,476,261
Protestant	55,837,325
TOTAL	94,842,845

The total number of pastors having charges in local churches is 207,618. Only about 200 religious bodies report on this item. The number of Protestant pastors reported with charges now stands at 187,551. All bodies report a total of 338,250 ordained persons on their rolls, many of these being retired or in special work.

There is a total enrollment of 35,389,466 persons in 262,084 Sunday or Sabbath schools, including 2,741,929 teachers and officers. The gain in enrollment was 8.1 per cent for the year. Protestant Sunday schools reported 93.6 per cent of the total enrollment.

There are 77 religious bodies with over 50,000 members each, and these reported 98.2 per cent of all church members.

A table of these religious bodies follows:

Membership of 77 Religious Bodies with 50,000 or More Members

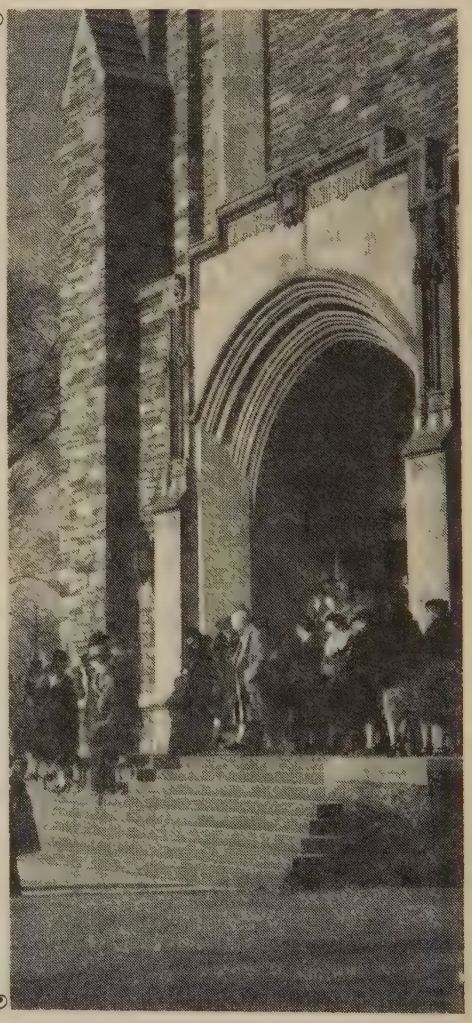
Name of Religious Body	*Year*	*Number of Churches*	*Inclusive Membership*
Seventh-day Adventists	1953	2,835	260,742
Apostolic Overcoming Holy Church of God	1951	300	75,000
Assemblies of God	1953	6,400	370,118
BAPTIST BODIES:			
American Baptist Convention	1952	6,531	1,557,816
Southern Baptist Convention	1953	29,481	7,883,708
National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.	1953	24,415	4,526,847
National Baptist Convention of America	1953	11,136	2,606,510
American Baptist Association	1951	2,105	286,691
Free Will Baptists	1953	4,200	425,000
General Baptists	1953	688	52,382
National Baptist Evangelical Life and Soul Saving Assembly of U.S.A.	1951	264	57,674
National Primitive Baptist Convention of the U.S.A.	1952	1,019	80,000
North American Baptist Association	1953	1,591	160,000
Primitive Baptists	1950	1,000	72,000
United Free Will Baptist Church	1952	836	100,000
BRETHREN (GERMAN BAPTISTS):			
Church of the Brethren	1953	1,028	190,263
Buddhist Churches of America	1953	48	63,000
Christ Unity Science Church	1953	4,481	1,581,286
Christian and Missionary Alliance	1952	928	56,097
CHURCHES OF GOD:			
Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn.)	1953	2,615	131,623
Church of God (Anderson, Ind.)	1953	2,051	113,698
The Church of God	1953	1,723	66,293
Church of God in Christ	1953	3,600	338,304
Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.	1952	175	50,000
Church of the Nazarene	1953	3,826	249,749
Churches of Christ	1953	15,000	1,500,000
Congregational Christian Churches	1953	5,573	1,283,754
Disciples of Christ, International Convention	1953	7,864	1,847,954
EASTERN CHURCHES:			
American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church	1953	58	75,000
Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church of America	1951	57	130,000
Greek Archdiocese of North and South America	1953	325	1,000,000
Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America	1953	55	50,000
The Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia	1951	91	55,000
The Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of North America	1953	326	440,000
Serbian Eastern Orthodox Church	1953	53	100,000
Syrian Antiochian Orthodox Church	1953	80	100,000
Ukrainian Orthodox Church of U.S.A.	1953	93	71,000
Evangelical and Reformed Church	1953	2,735	761,335
Evangelical Mission Covenant Church of America	1953	476	52,085
Evangelical United Brethren Church	1953	4,347	727,549
Federated Churches	1936	508	88,411
FRIENDS:			
The Five Years Meeting of Friends	1952	499	69,419
Independent Fundamental Churches of America	1946	650	65,000

Name of Religious Body	*Year*	*Number of Churches*	*Inclusive Membership*
International Church of the Foursquare Gospel	1953	579	81,590
Jewish Congregations	1953	3,990	5,000,000
LATTER-DAY SAINTS:			
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints	1952	2,348	1,077,285
Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints	1953	692	131,781
LUTHERAN:			
American Lutheran Conference—			
American Lutheran Church	1952	1,891	767,261
Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church	1953	1,196	493,085
Evangelical Lutheran Church	1952	2,503	888,634
Lutheran Free Church	1953	341	65,904
Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America—			
Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod	1953	4,592	1,850,100
Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States	1952	837	316,839
United Lutheran Church in America	1953	3,991	2,061,004
Mennonite Church	1953	498	63,016
METHODIST BODIES:			
African Methodist Episcopal Church	1951	5,878	1,166,301
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church	1952	3,160	760,158
Colored Methodist Episcopal Church	1951	2,469	392,167
Free Methodist Church of N. A.	1953	1,268	51,952
The Methodist Church	1953	39,780	9,151,524
Moravian Church in America (Unitas Fratrum)	1953	152	51,276
OLD CATHOLIC CHURCHES:			
North American Old Roman Catholic Church	1953	52	85,500
PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLIES:			
Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, Inc.	1951	600	50,000
United Pentecostal Church	1952	1,100	125,000
Polish National Catholic Church of America	1951	156	265,879
PRESBYTERIAN BODIES:			
Cumberland Presbyterian Church	1953	1,014	83,307
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.	1953	3,778	756,866
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.	1953	8,320	2,492,504
United Presbyterian Church of N.A.	1953	831	228,718
Protestant Episcopal Church	1952	7,215	2,550,831
REFORMED BODIES:			
Christian Reformed Church	1953	429	186,526
Reformed Church in America	1953	787	197,616
Roman Catholic Church	1953	20,618	31,476,261
Salvation Army	1953	1,342	235,559
SPIRITUALISTS:			
International General Assembly of Spiritualists	1952	182	157,000
Unitarian Churches	1953	355	86,129
Universalist Church of America	1953	404	73,194
Total: 77 Bodies only		275,414	93,192,075

WHAT IS YOUR CHURCH??

Is it a place of which you casually say, "I belong?"
A place you turn to only when things go wrong?
And your giving—is it an obligation that must be met?
Or do you say, thankfully, "That's one bill I won't get?"
And as far as time's concerned, do you have any to give?
Or do you say, "Get someone else, I'm too busy to live?"
Or is it a place that you point to with pride,
Saying, "This is *my* church, come on inside
And I'll show you just what it means to be
A member of a body that gives much to me.
You'll find it's a place of good fellowship and fun
And come to it gladly as each Sabbath's begun.
And because I love this church so much
I want to help others 'to get in touch'
With the Founder, that they, too, might know of His love
And feed on His strength as He guides from above."
Yes, we make the church, that is certainly true,
So . . . *What is the church . . . according to you?*

—RUTH KREBILL
Chairman, Commission on Membership and Evangelism
Trinity Church
Keokuk, Iowa



Toward a More Vital Experience in Prayer

A Primer of Prayer

by Charles M. Laymon

Guidance and spiritual enrichment for the "average layman." A vital book.

50¢ each; 12 or more, 35¢ each

Pyramids of Prayer

by Mildred Thomas

An inspiring and helpful testimony of the experience and power of prayer.

$2.00 per 100

Learning to Pray

by Howard L. Stimmel

A two-color tract emphasizing the essentials of prayer.

$2.00 per 100

Prayer Circles Card

Provides place for prayer list, prayer suggestions, and prayer pledge.

$2.00 per 100

TIDINGS

Headquarters for Evangelistic Materials

1908 Grand Ave. Nashville 5, Tenn.

Official Washington Prays

by W. S. Paul

International Christian Leadership, Inc.

OFFICIAL WASHINGTON has been frequently reminded of the fact that this nation, born in prayer, has survived one crisis after another *through* prayer. We are finding that true today.

A group for prayer, Bible meditation, and round table discussion about the things of God meets regularly in the United States Senate, where both Republicans and Democrats find fellowship and renewal in union with our Lord Jesus Christ. A similar and much larger group meets in the House of Representatives. Both are invitational and limited to members of the two Houses of Congress.

A virile group meets in the Pentagon with officers of the various branches of service; another, in the Department of Agriculture; another, among doctors. Similar groups, consisting of the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, judges, police officials, business and professional men and representatives from the various Government departments, also meet. There are other groups representing the embassies and university life.

In all of these groups—most of which meet weekly—there is a growing sense of utter dependence on God. We find that His "Word is a lamp unto our feet and light unto our path," and that the "entrance of Thy Word giveth light." We find in the "Good Old Book" God's blueprint for both our personal and social life.

Many of us have come to a new life as we have learned to believe God and His Work, accept His Son Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour, and surrender our lives to Him as Lord. In so doing, we find it possible to begin to close the gap between theory and practice and to produce a leadership led by God.

The International Christian Leadership sponsors such groups throughout the nation on both denominational and interdenominational levels. Thus, it makes the Church a living force throughout the week by regenerated men of faith who are empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Practical Pointers for Visitation Evangelism in Your Lenten "Four Nights for God" Program

Principles of Effective Visiting

1. **Interview your prospect** in a favorable environment. In the home in the quiet of the evening is best.
2. **Create a favorable atmosphere,** and have genuine interest in your prospect.
3. **Use team work.** Let there be only one conversation in the room; a second conversation is static and distracting.
4. **Ask questions** tactfully, but do not monopolize conversation.
5. **Be a good listener,** but do not accept any excuse. Use the "Yes—but" psychology.
6. **Use the agreement psychology**—Avoid "No" or "Not now."
7. **Face emergency situations.** Relate your experience or ask questions.
8. **Use the "Talking Points" below.** They secure results.
9. **Be optimistic.** Expect results.
10. **Visit for a verdict.** Secure the decision and have it recorded.
11. When the prospect is convinced, **close the case** with some form of consecration.

How to Conduct an Interview

1. When you enter a home, **take an interest** in the family, pay particular attention to the children. Talk with them. You may observe flowers or some object in the home which you can admire. Your appreciation and friendliness create a favorable environment for your visit. (This can be done while being seated.)
2. **Inform the prospect** about the visitation endeavor and the purpose of your visit. "This is Visitation Week at the——church, and members are calling on all the friends of our church."
3. **Learn your prospect's attitude** and religious background. "Since your children are in the church school (or the reason stated on the Prospect Card), you are probably a member of a church somewhere?" If you need additional information, some such question may be asked: "May I inquire what church or church school you or your parents attended during your youth?" A smile of genuine friendliness with such personal questions is well received. A pause gives your prospect time to explain his past religious connections.
4. **Direct the conversation,** making use of some of the "talking points" of visitation evangelism to prepare the way for the decision. "You believe in the ideals and principles for which Christ and the Church stand. The challenge surely comes to you as to everyone else, that you should become a Christian." Do not proceed too fast. Permit him to take part in the conversation. Talk about the excuses he makes but do not let excuses sidetrack the main issue. Direct the conversation so that before you are through your prospect honestly talks about the reason why he should become a Christian and unite with the Church.
5. **Secure the decision.** After you feel that the prospect is convinced that he should become a Christian, present him with a "Record of Commitment" card and have him record his commitment before you leave.

Ten Effective Talking Points

1. **Conscience.** "You believe in Christ and realize that you should be a Christian." Many prospects will say, "I have no argument against it. I know it is what I should do."

"Four Nights for God" Visitor's Agreement

I agree to participate as a visitor in the "Four Nights for God" program of evangelism.

I will attend each of the four Preparation Periods, as planned by my pastor and church, prior to the week of visitation.

I will attend each of the four training conferences in visitation evangelism, and with a teammate will make friendly visits upon assigned prospects.

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

Basic to the "Four Nights for God" program is the Visitor's Agreement Card, shown above in miniature, available from Tidings at 50¢ per 100.

Prospect and Assignment Card

Name _____

Address _____

Report and Follow-up Recommendations _____

_____

_____

_____

(Use reverse side, if necessary)

_____

Called on by _____ Date _____

INFORMATION FOR VISITORS

( ) Newcomer
( ) Attends Church Service
( ) Member Elsewhere
( ) Survey—Prefer Our Church
( ) Member of Sunday School
( ) Child in Sunday School
( ) Wife or Children Members
( ) Attends Youth Meetings
( ) Attends Women's Meetings
( ) Baby on Cradle Roll
( ) Contributor
( ) _____
( ) _____

Essential to effective visiting is the Prospect and Assignment Card, shown above in reduced form, also available from Tidings at 50¢ per 100.

2. **The Intellectual Appeal** receives a fine response. "You believe and accept the teachings of Christ. Then, the example and influence of your life should be for Christ and the Church." Challenge the prospect to act on his convictions now.
3. **The Appeal of Duty** may be presented as something the prospect owes to himself, his children, a Christian wife, Christian parents, friends, or society.
4. **Spiritual Help** is available. The prospect is told that his habits and conduct must be changed to conform to the Christian way of living. He is given guidance about his daily devotional and prayer habits so that the spirit of Christ will come into his life and transform, purify, and strengthen his character.
5. **The Appeal for a Christian Home** includes parental responsibility for the moral and religious training of children. Most parents will sacrifice and make any necessary adjustment in life for the welfare of home and children.
6. **Christian Friendship.** The Christian decision of husband, wife, children, or friends is the deciding factor for many prospects. The information that friends expect to unite with the Church encourages others to make decisions.
7. **The Personal Interest Appeal** is very effective. "I would like to have you become a Christian and unite with the Church." There are many who never have had anyone to speak to them about Christ, the Christian life, or membership in the Church.
8. **Service.** The appeal for Christian service is very effective for youth, young married people, and modern businessmen who have a vision of community service.
9. **Influence.** Each person wants this world to be better because he has lived in it. To become a Christian and unite with the Church is one of the best things that anyone can do, and his example will benefit others.
10. **World Conditions.** The teachings of Christ are the fundamental principles that undergird democracy. A spiritual mobilization is needed! The Church was never more necessary than now.

Record of Commitment

Equip your laymen with a supply of **Record of Commitment Folders** which help keep the records straight. The final goal of visitation evangelism is to get the person visited to commit his life to Christ. This folder is not only helpful in securing the commitment but necessary for careful follow-up and church records. The pastor uses the Record of Commitment Folders to plan his spiritual guidance visit, to arrange for training in the Christian life and reception into the church on Membership Sunday, and to help the newly-won Christian in feeling at home in the church fellowship. His visit gives time for prayer and devotional emphasis.

An Invitation

From Christ and His Church

My Commitment

_____I believe in Jesus Christ and purpose with His help to live a Christian life.

_____I desire to unite with the _____ Church, and plan to present myself for membership on Sunday, _____

_____I desire reinstatement by vows.

_____I wish to transfer my membership to this church. For certificate write to _____ at _____

My name is recorded there as _____

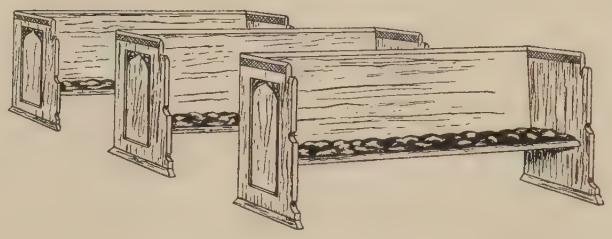
NAME _____

Address _____

At left are illustrated two sections of the threefold Record of Commitment Folder. This streamer-type folder, actually 15 inches long by 3 inches wide, is designed so that part may be left with the individual and part returned to the church. This folder sells at $1.50 per 100.

THE DIFFERENCE

between this



and this

is often .....

this .....

Write TIDINGS

Headquarters for Evangelistic Materials

1908 Grand Avenue

Nashville 5, Tennessee

for

helpful folder on

VISITATION EVANGELISM MATERIALS

(Do It Today!)

Christ Calls ---We Answer

by Raymond M. Veh

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

THE CALL OF CHRIST is always the same. When He calls "Follow Me," there is no other way to become a disciple save to respond. The call of Christ today comes through the Bible, the Church, the Holy Spirit, and other media of God's will.

There are many calls in today's world. Many heed the alluring call of pleasure. It is natural and human to seek thrills. The pursuit of happiness is a perpetual call. Many respond to the siren call of sensuality and demand baser and more evil calls to satisfy their appetites.

The call of wealth is pressing in today's economy. Worldly substance can be deadening and damning. The siren call of materialism is at the bottom of our economic and social ills. It is the cause of chaos in human relationships.

The call of knowledge is to power. For selfish purposes, we can justify the use of the atomic bomb on Nagasaki. But does not selfishness start us on the long road of hatred?

Fortunate, indeed, are the individuals who hear Christ's call to the abundant life. His call is fourfold:

1. Christ calls to *evangelism*. Those who answer will become fishers of men. They will enlist others for the Kingdom.

Life Abundant

2. Christ calls to *stewardship*. Those who invest time and talent and money in the Church will find life abundant. Each of us has an individual responsibility to respond to Christ's call to stewardship and to live a life of service.

3. Christ calls to *Christian growth*. The development of the excellent in personality is ever upon us. Youth of the Church are called by faithful pastors, teachers, workers to seek fulfilment of life by dedicating their all to the One who asks all to grow in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.

4. Christ calls to *world-wide* outreach. There is need among the peoples of the world for the hope which the gospel of Christ gives. The eternal imperative is: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations." To fulfil this divine command requires complete dedication of life.

Yes, Christ calls. I will answer with my whole self!

TIDINGS

1908 Grand Ave., Nashville 5, Tennessee

Order Blank

For Your Religious Census

THE RELIGIOUS CENSUS PACKET

The most satisfactory way for single churches or small communities to order religious census materials is simply to order one of the packets listed below, according to the population of the community.

200 population—Packet A Price, $ 1.00
500 population—Packet 1 Price, 2.50
750 population—Packet 2 Price, 3.75
1,000 population—Packet 3 Price, 5.00
1,500 population—Packet 4 Price, $ 7.00
2,000 population—Packet 5 Price, 9.00
2,500 population—Packet 6 Price, 11.00
3,000 population—Packet 7 Price, $13.00
4,000 population—Packet 8 Price, 17.00
5,000 population—Packet 9 Price, 21.00

Mark Price of Your Packet Here $_____

MATERIALS TO SELECT FROM

For larger communities or for churches which want to make up their own order, the materials below will be necessary. If you have ordered a packet, do not order these materials separately, unless you want extra copies.

_____ **The Religious Census,** by Eugene E. Golay (Revised). 10¢ each; 6 for 50¢ _____
A basic "how" book.

_____ **"Religious Census Worker's Agreement" cards,** 50¢ per 100 _____
This card should be signed in duplicate by each worker when enlisted for the census.

_____ **"Instruction Leaflet for Census Takers"** 2¢ each _____

_____ **"Friendly Community Study" cards,** 50¢ per 100; $4.00 per 1,000 for 10,000 or more; $3.00 per 1,000 for 50,000 _____

_____ **"Friendly Community Study" envelopes,** 75¢ per 100. _____
You need an envelope for each team, plus extras. Order in multiples of 25, please.

For Your "Four Nights for God" Program

_____ **Four Nights for God** 10¢ each; 6 for 50¢ _____
(A basic booklet.)

_____ **"Four Nights for God" Visitor's Agreement Card** 50¢ per 100 _____

_____ **"Four Nights for God" Prospect and Assignment Card** 50¢ per 100 _____

_____ **Record of Commitment Folder** $1.50 per 100 _____

Visitation Evangelism Packet

Every church should order a Visitation Evangelism Packet, according to its size, as listed below. Each packet contains the minimum materials necessary for Visitation Evangelism.

Check packet nearest the number of your active members.

( ) 100 members, $ 3.00
( ) 200 members, 5.00
( ) 300 members, 7.50
( ) 400 members, 10.00
( ) 500 members, 12.50
( ) 600 members, 15.00
( ) 700 members, 17.50
( ) 800 members, $20.00
( ) 900 members, 22.50
( ) 1,000 members, 25.00
( ) 1,250 members, 27.50
( ) 1,500 members, 30.00
( ) 1,750 members, 32.50
( ) 2,000 members, 35.00

Mark Price of Your Packet Here $_____

"How" Booklets on Evangelism

_____ **How to Have a Successful Week of Visitation Evangelism,** by Dawson C. Bryan. 10¢ each; 6 for 50¢ _____

_____ **How to Have a Preaching and Reaching Revival in Your Church.** 10¢ each; 6 for 50¢ _____

_____ **The Fishermen's Club,** by Dawson C. Bryan. 10¢ each; 6 for 50¢ _____

_____ **How to Conduct a Spiritual Life Mission,** by G. Ernest Thomas. 10¢ each; 6 for 50¢ _____

_____ **Assimilating New Members,** by G. Ernest Thomas. 10¢ each; 6 for 50¢ _____

Recent Tidings Books

_____ **Militant and Triumphant,** by William Gowland 50¢ each; 12 or more, 35¢ each _____

_____ **How to Find the Will of God,** by Kirby Page 50¢ each; 12 or more, 35¢ each _____

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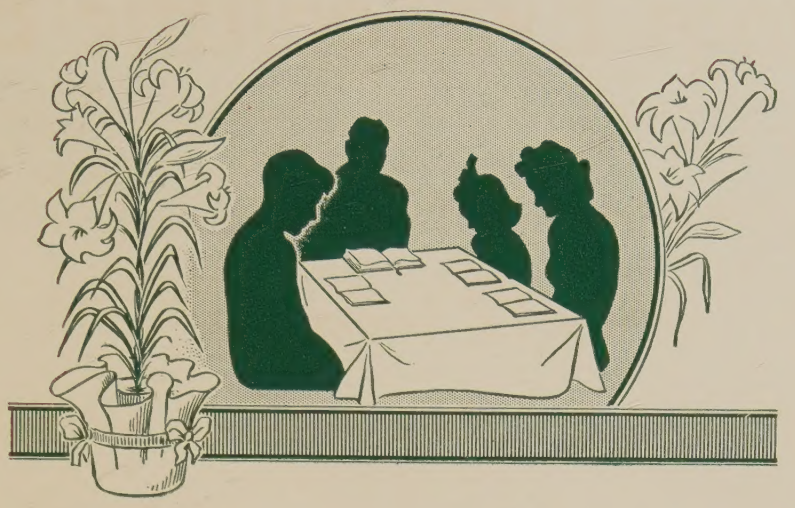

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